



# The LEACOCK ROUNDAABOUT

A treasury of the best works of  
**STEPHEN LEACOCK**

# THE LEACOCK ROUNABOUT

A TREASURY OF THE BEST WORKS OF

STEPHEN LEACOCK

HERE is one of the funniest books of our times—the best of Stephen Leacock's writings selected from more than a score of those laughter-provoking volumes with which the genial Canadian-American humorist has been delighting us these last three decades. Included here for the first time in a single sumptuous volume are the cream of his hilarious nonsense novels, the uproarious burlesque dramas, the comic portrait of his remarkable uncle and of his fellow fishermen, the unbelievable and highly mendacious reports of his experiences as a lecturer, the superb story of how he once joined a bank—in short, a superlative mixed grill of mock scholarship and delectable nonsense seasoned here and there with a shrewd and serious piece on college life, American-Canadian friendship, and such timely matters.

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**THE LEACOCK  
ROUNDAABOUT**

*Books by*  
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THE BRITISH EMPIRE  
STEPHEN LEACOCK'S LAUGH PARADE  
MY REMARKABLE UNCLE  
HOW TO WRITE  
HAPPY STORIES, JUST TO LAUGH AT  
LAST LEAVES

# THE LEACOCK ROUNDAABOUT

A TREASURY OF  
THE BEST WORKS  
OF  
STEPHEN LEACOCK



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1962

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**THE LEACOCK  
ROUNDAABOUT**



## HUMOUR AS I SEE IT

IT is only fair that I should be allowed a few pages to myself to put down some things that I really think. Once I might have taken my pen in hand to write about humour with the confident air of an acknowledged professional.

But that time is past. Such claim as I had has been taken from me. In fact I stand unmasked. An English reviewer writing in a literary journal, the very name of which is enough to put contradiction to sleep, has said of my writing, "What is there, after all, in Professor Leacock's humour but a rather ingenious mixture of hyperbole and myosis?"

The man was right. How he stumbled upon this trade secret, I do not know. But I am willing to admit, since the truth is out, that it has long been my custom in preparing an article of a humorous nature to go down to the cellar and mix up half a gallon of myosis with a pint of hyperbole. If I want to give the article a decidedly literary character, I find it well to put in about half a pint of paresis. The whole thing is amazingly simple.

But I only mention this by way of introduction and to dispel any idea that I am conceited enough to write about humour, with the professional authority of Ella Wheeler Wilcox writing about love, or Fred Astaire talking about dancing.

All that I dare claim is that I have as much sense of humour as other people. And, oddly enough, I notice that everybody else makes this same claim. Any man will admit, if need be, that his sight is not good, or that he cannot swim, or shoots badly with a rifle, but to touch upon his sense of humour is to give him a mortal affront.

"No," said a friend of mine the other day, "I never go to Grand Opera," and then he added with an air of pride—"You see, I have absolutely no ear for music."

"You don't say so!" I exclaimed.

"None!" he went on. "I can't tell one tune from another. I don't

know *Home, Sweet Home* from *God Save the King*. I can't tell whether a man is tuning a violin or playing a sonata."

He seemed to get prouder and prouder over each item of his own deficiency. He ended by saying that he had a dog at his house that had a far better ear for music than he had. As soon as his wife or any visitor started to play the piano the dog always began to howl—plainly, he said, as if it were hurt. He himself never did this.

When he had finished I made what I thought a harmless comment.

"I suppose," I said, "that you find your sense of humour deficient in the same way: the two generally go together."

My friend was livid with rage in a moment.

"Sense of humour!" he said. "My sense of humour! Me without a sense of humour! Why, I suppose I've a keener sense of humour than any man, or any two men, in this city!"

From that he turned to bitter personal attack. He said that *my* sense of humour seemed to have withered altogether.

He left me, still quivering with indignation.

Personally, however, I do not mind making the admission, however damaging it may be, that there are certain forms of so-called humour, or, at least, fun, which I am quite unable to appreciate. Chief among these is that ancient thing called the Practical Joke.

"You never knew McGann, did you?" a friend of mine asked me the other day. When I said, "No, I had never known McGann," he shook his head with a sigh, and said:

"Ah, you should have known McGann. He had the greatest sense of humour of any man I ever knew—always full of jokes. I remember one night at the boarding house where we were, he stretched a string across the passageway and then rang the dinner bell. One of the boarders broke his leg. We nearly died laughing."

"Dear me!" I said. "What a humourist! Did he often do things like that?"

"Oh, yes, he was at them all the time. He used to put tar in the tomato soup, and beeswax and tin-tacks on the chairs. He was full of ideas. They seemed to come to him without any trouble."

McGann, I understand, is dead. I am not sorry for it. Indeed I think that for most of us the time has gone by when we can see the fun of putting tacks on chairs, or thistles in beds, or live snakes in people's boots.



To me it has always seemed that the very essence of good humour is that it must be without harm and without malice. I admit that there is in all of us a certain vein of the old original demoniacal humour or joy in the misfortune of another which sticks to us like our original sin. It ought not to be funny to see a man, especially a fat and pompous man, slip suddenly on a banana skin. But it is. When a skater on a pond who is describing graceful circles and showing off before the crowd, breaks through the ice and gets a ducking, everybody shouts with joy. To the original savage, the cream of the joke in such cases was found if the man who slipped broke his neck, or the man who went through the ice never came up again. I can imagine a group of prehistoric men standing round the ice-hole where he had disappeared and laughing till their sides split. If there had been such a thing as a prehistoric newspaper, the affair would have been headed up: "*Amusing Incident. Unknown Gentleman Breaks Through Ice and Is Drowned.*"

But our sense of humour under civilization has been weakened. Much of the fun of this sort of thing has been lost on us.

Children, however, still retain a large share of this primitive sense of enjoyment.

I remember once watching two little boys making snow-balls at the side of the street and getting ready a little store of them to use. As they worked there came along an old man wearing a silk hat, and belonging by appearance to the class of "jolly old gentlemen." When he saw the boys his gold spectacles gleamed with kindly enjoyment. He began waving his arms and calling, "Now, then, boys, free shot at me! free shot!" In his gaiety he had, without noticing it, edged himself over the sidewalk on to the street. An express cart collided with him and knocked him over on his back in a heap of snow. He lay there gasping and trying to get the snow off his face and spectacles. The boys gathered up their snow-balls and took a run towards him. "Free shot!" they yelled. "Soak him! Soak him!"

I repeat, however, that for me, as I suppose for most of us, it is a prime condition of humour that it must be without harm or malice, nor should it convey even incidentally any real picture of sorrow or suffering or death. There is a great deal in the humour of Scotland (I admit its general merit) which seems to me, not being a Scotchman, to sin in this respect. Take this familiar story (I quote it as some-

thing already known and not for the sake of telling it).

A Scotchman had a sister-in-law—his wife's sister—with whom he could never agree. He always objected to going anywhere with her, and in spite of his wife's entreaties always refused to do so. The wife was taken mortally ill and as she lay dying, she whispered, "John, ye'll drive Janet with you to the funeral, will ye no?" The Scotchman, after an internal struggle, answered, "Margaret, I'll do it for ye, but it'll spoil my day."

Whatever humour there may be in this is lost for me by the actual and vivid picture that it conjures up—the dying wife, the darkened room and the last whispered request.

No doubt the Scotch see things differently. That wonderful people—whom personally I cannot too much admire—always seem to me to prefer adversity to sunshine, to welcome the prospect of a pretty general damnation, and to live with grim cheerfulness within the very shadow of death. Alone among the nations they have converted the devil—under such names as Old Horny—into a familiar acquaintance not without a certain grim charm of his own. No doubt also there enters into their humour something of the original barbaric attitude towards things. For a primitive people who saw death often and at first hand, and for whom the future world was a vivid reality, that could be *felt*, as it were, in the midnight forest and heard in the roaring storm—for such a people it was no doubt natural to turn the flank of terror by forcing a merry and jovial acquaintance with the unseen world. Such a practice as a wake, and the merrymaking about the corpse, carry us back to the twilight of the world, with the poor savage in his bewildered misery, pretending that his dead still lived. Our funeral with its black trappings and its elaborate ceremonies is the lineal descendant of a merrymaking. Our undertaker is, by evolution, a genial master of ceremonies, keeping things lively at the death-dance. Thus have the ceremonies and the trappings of death been transformed in the course of ages till the forced gaiety is gone, and the black hearse and the gloomy mutes betoken the cold dignity of our despair.

But I fear this article is getting serious. I must apologize.

I was about to say, when I wandered from the point, that there is another form of humour which I am also quite unable to appreciate. This is that particular form of story which may be called, *par excel-*

lence, the English Anecdote. It always deals with persons of rank and birth, and, except for the exalted nature of the subject itself, is, as far as I can see, absolutely pointless.

This is the kind of thing that I mean.

"His Grace the Fourth Duke of Marlborough was noted for the openhanded hospitality which reigned at Blenheim, the family seat, during his régime. One day on going in to luncheon it was discovered that there were thirty guests present, whereas the table only held covers for twenty-one. 'Oh, well,' said the Duke, not a whit abashed, 'some of us will have to eat standing up.' Everybody, of course, roared with laughter."

My only wonder is that they didn't kill themselves with it. A mere roar doesn't seem enough to do justice to such a story as this.

The Duke of Wellington has been made the storm-centre of three generations of wit of this sort. In fact the typical Duke of Wellington story had been reduced to a thin skeleton such as this:

"A young subaltern once met the Duke of Wellington coming out of Westminster Abbey. 'Good morning, your Grace,' he said, 'rather a wet morning.' 'Yes,' said the Duke, with a very rigid bow, 'but it was a damn sight wetter, sir, on the morning of Waterloo.' The young subaltern, rightly rebuked, hung his head."

Nor is it only the English who sin in regard to anecdotes.

One can indeed make the sweeping assertion that the telling of stories as a mode of amusing others, ought to be kept within strict limits. Few people realize how extremely difficult it is to tell a story so as to reproduce the real fun of it—to "get it over" as the actors say. The mere "facts" of a story seldom make it funny. It needs the right words, with every word in its proper place. Here and there, perhaps once in a hundred times, a story turns up which needs no telling. The humour of it turns so completely on a sudden twist or incongruity in the dénouement of it that no narrator however clumsy can altogether fumble it.

Take, for example, this well known instance—a story which, in one form or other, everybody has heard.

"George Grossmith, the famous comedian, was once badly run down and went to consult a doctor. It happened that the doctor, though, like everybody else, he had often seen Grossmith on the stage, had never seen him without his make-up and did not know him by

sight. He examined his patient, looked at his tongue, felt his pulse and tapped his lungs. Then he shook his head. "There's nothing wrong with you, sir," he said, 'except that you're run down from overwork and worry. You need rest and amusement. Take a night off and go and see George Grossmith at the Savoy.'

"'Thank you,' said the patient, 'I *am* George Grossmith.'"

Let the reader please observe that I have purposely told this story all wrongly, just as wrongly as could be, and yet there is something left of it. Will the reader kindly look back to the beginning of it and see for himself just how it ought to be narrated and what obvious error has been made. If he has any particle of the artist in his make-up, he will see at once that the story ought to begin:

"One day a very haggard and nervous-looking patient called at the office of a fashionable doctor, etc., etc."

In other words, the chief point of the joke lies in keeping it concealed till the moment when the patient says, "Thank you, I am George Grossmith." But the story is such a good one that it cannot be completely spoiled even when told wrongly. This particular anecdote has been variously told of George Grossmith, Coquelin, Joe Jefferson, John Hare, Cyril Maude, and about sixty others. And I have noticed that there is a certain type of man who, on hearing this story about Grossmith, immediately tells it all back again, putting in the name of somebody else, and goes into new fits of laughter over it, as if the change of name made it brand new.

But few people, I repeat, realize the difficulty of reproducing a humorous or comic effect in its original spirit.

"I saw Harry Lauder last night," said Griggs, a Stock-Exchange friend of mine, as we walked up town together the other day. "He came onto the stage in kilts" (here Griggs started to chuckle) "and he had a slate under his arm" (here Griggs began to laugh quite heartily), "and he said, 'I always like to carry a slate with me' (of course he said it in Scotch, but I can't do the Scotch the way he does it) 'just in case there might be any figures I'd be wanting to put down'" (by this time Griggs was almost suffocated with laughter)—"and he took a little bit of chalk out of his pocket, and he said" (Griggs was now almost hysterical), "'I like to carry a wee bit chalk along because I find the slate is (Griggs was now faint with laughter), 'the slate is—is—not much good without the chalk.'"



Griggs had to stop, with his hand to his side and lean against a lamp post. "I can't, of course, do the Scotch the way Harry Lauder does it," he repeated.

Exactly. He couldn't do the Scotch and he couldn't do the rich mellow voice of Mr. Lauder and the face beaming with merriment, and the spectacles glittering with amusement, and he couldn't do the slate, nor the "wee bit chalk"—in fact he couldn't do any of it. He ought merely to have said, "Harry Lauder," and leaned up against a post and laughed till he had got over it.

Yet in spite of everything, people insist on spoiling conversation by telling stories. I know nothing more dreadful at a dinner table than one of these amateur raconteurs—except perhaps, two of them. After about three stories have been told, there falls on the dinner table an uncomfortable silence, in which everybody is aware that everybody else is trying hard to think of another story, and is failing to find it. There is no peace in the gathering again till some man of firm and quiet mind turns to his neighbour and says—"But after all there is no doubt that whether we like it or not prohibition is coming." Then everybody in his heart says, Thank Heaven! and the whole tableful are happy and contented again, till one of the story tellers "thinks of another," and breaks loose.

Worst of all perhaps is the modest story teller who is haunted by the idea that one has heard his story before. He attacks you after this fashion:

"I heard a very good story the other day on the steamer going to Bermuda"—then he pauses with a certain doubt in his face—"but perhaps you've heard this?"

"No, no, I've never been to Bermuda. Go ahead."

"Well, this is a story that they tell about a man who went down to Bermuda one winter to get cured of rheumatism—but you've heard this?"

"No, no."

"Well, he had rheumatism pretty bad and he went to Bermuda to get cured of it. And so when he went into the hotel he said to the clerk at the desk—but, perhaps you know this."

"No, no, go right ahead."

"Well, he said to the clerk I want a room that looks out over the sea—but perhaps—"

Now the sensible thing to do is to stop the narrator right at this point. Say to him quietly and firmly, "Yes, I have heard that story. I always liked it ever since it came out in *Titbits* in 1878, and I read it every time I see it. Go on and tell it to me and I'll sit back with my eyes closed and enjoy it."

No doubt the story-telling habit owes much to the fact that ordinary people, quite unconsciously, rate humour very low: I mean, they underestimate the difficulty of "making humour." It would never occur to them that the thing is hard, meritorious and dignified. Because the result is gay and light, they think the process must be. Few people would realize that it is much harder to write one of Owen Seaman's "funny" poems in *Punch* than to write one of the Archbishop of Canterbury's sermons. Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* is a greater work than Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, and Charles Dickens' creation of Mr. Pickwick did more for the elevation of the human race—I say it in all seriousness—than Cardinal Newman's *Lead, Kindly Light, Amid the Encircling Gloom*. Newman only cried out for light in the gloom of a sad world. Dickens gave it.

But the deep background that lies behind and beyond what we call humour is revealed only to the few who, by instinct or by effort, have given thought to it. The world's humour, in its best and greatest sense, is perhaps the highest product of our civilization. One thinks here not of the mere spasmodic effects of the comic artist or the black-face expert of the vaudeville show, but of the really great humour which, once or twice in a generation at best, illuminates and elevates our literature. It is no longer dependent upon the mere trick and quibble of words, or the odd and meaningless incongruities in things that strike us as "funny." Its basis lies in the deeper contrasts offered by life itself: the strange incongruity between our aspiration and our achievement, the eager and fretful anxieties of to-day that fade into nothingness to-morrow, the burning pain and the sharp sorrow that are softened in the gentle retrospect of time, till as we look back upon the course that has been traversed we pass in view the panorama of our lives, as people in old age may recall, with mingled tears and smiles, the angry quarrels of their childhood. And here, in its larger aspect, humour is blended with pathos till the two are one, and represent, as they have in every age, the mingled heritage of tears and laughter that is our lot on earth.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND  
RECOLLECTIONS



## MY FINANCIAL CAREER

WHEN I go into a bank I get rattled. The clerks rattle me; the wickets rattle me; the sight of the money rattles me; everything rattles me.

The moment I cross the threshold of a bank and attempt to transact business there, I become an irresponsible idiot.

I knew this beforehand, but my salary had been raised to fifty dollars a month and I felt that the bank was the only place for it.

So I shambled in and looked timidly round at the clerks. I had an idea that a person about to open an account must needs consult the manager.

I went up to a wicket marked "Accountant." The accountant was a tall, cool devil. The very sight of him rattled me. My voice was sepulchral.

"Can I see the manager?" I said, and added solemnly, "alone." I don't know why I said "alone."

"Certainly," said the accountant, and fetched him.

The manager was a grave, calm man. I held my fifty-six dollars clutched in a crumpled ball in my pocket.

"Are you the manager?" I said. God knows I didn't doubt it.

"Yes," he said.

"Can I see you," I asked, "alone?" I didn't want to say "alone" again, but without it the thing seemed self-evident.

The manager looked at me in some alarm. He felt that I had an awful secret to reveal.

"Come in here," he said, and led the way to a private room. He turned the key in the lock.

"We are safe from interruption here," he said; "sit down."

We both sat down and looked at each other. I found no voice to speak.

"You are one of Pinkerton's men, I presume," he said.

He had gathered from my mysterious manner that I was a detective.

I knew what he was thinking, and it made me worse.

"No, not from Pinkerton's," I said, seeming to imply that I came from a rival agency.

"To tell the truth," I went on, as if I had been prompted to lie about it, "I am not a detective at all. I have come to open an account. I intend to keep all my money in this bank."

The manager looked relieved but still serious; he concluded now that I was a son of Baron Rothschild or a young Gould.

"A large account, I suppose," he said.

"Fairly large," I whispered. "I propose to deposit fifty-six dollars now and fifty dollars a month regularly."

The manager got up and opened the door. He called to the accountant.

"Mr. Montgomery," he said unkindly loud, "this gentleman is opening an account, he will deposit fifty-six dollars. Good morning."

I rose.

A big iron door stood open at the side of the room.

"Good morning," I said, and stepped into the safe.

"Come out," said the manager coldly, and showed me the other way.

I went up to the accountant's wicket and poked the ball of money at him with a quick convulsive movement as if I were doing a conjuring trick.

My face was ghastly pale.

"Here," I said, "deposit it." The tone of the words seemed to mean, "Let us do this painful thing while the fit is on us."

He took the money and gave it to another clerk.

He made me write the sum on a slip and sign my name in a book. I no longer knew what I was doing. The bank swam before my eyes.

"Is it deposited?" I asked in a hollow, vibrating voice.

"It is," said the accountant.

"Then I want to draw a cheque."

My idea was to draw out six dollars of it for present use. Someone gave me a cheque-book through a wicket and someone else began telling me how to write it out. The people in the bank had the impression that I was an invalid millionaire. I wrote something on the cheque and thrust it in at the clerk. He looked at it.

"What! are you drawing it all out again?" he asked in surprise.



Then I realized that I had written fifty-six instead of six. I was too far gone to reason now. I had a feeling that it was impossible to explain the thing. All the clerks had stopped writing to look at me.

Reckless with misery, I made a plunge.

"Yes, the whole thing."

"You withdraw your money from the bank?"

"Every cent of it."

"Are you not going to deposit any more?" said the clerk, astonished.

"Never."

An idiot hope struck me that they might think something had insulted me while I was writing the cheque and that I had changed my mind. I made a wretched attempt to look like a man with a fearfully quick temper.

The clerk prepared to pay the money.

"How will you have it?" he said.

"What?"

"How will you have it?"

"Oh"—I caught his meaning and answered without even trying to think—"in fifties."

He gave me a fifty-dollar bill.

"And the six?" he asked dryly.

"In sixes," I said.

He gave it me and I rushed out.

As the big door swung behind me I caught the echo of a roar of laughter that went up to the ceiling of the bank. Since then I bank no more. I keep my money in cash in my trousers pocket and my savings in silver dollars in a sock.

## THE MARINE EXCURSION OF THE KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS

HALF-PAST six on a July morning! The *Mariposa Belle* is at the wharf, decked in flags, with steam up ready to start.

Excursion day!

Half-past six on a July morning, and Lake Wissanotti lying in the sun as calm as glass. The opal colours of the morning light are shot from the surface of the water.

Out on the lake the last thin threads of the mist are clearing away like flecks of cotton wool.

The long call of the loon echoes over the lake. The air is cool and fresh. There is in it all the new life of the land of the silent pine and the moving waters. Lake Wissanotti in the morning sunlight! Don't talk to me of the Italian lakes, or the Tyrol or the Swiss Alps. Take them away. Move them somewhere else. I don't want them.

Excursion Day, at half-past six of a summer morning! With the boat all decked in flags and all the people in Mariposa on the wharf, and the band in peaked caps with big cornets tied to their bodies ready to play at any minute! I say! Don't tell me about the Carnival of Venice and the Delhi Durbar. Don't! I wouldn't look at them. I'd shut my eyes! For light and colour give me every time an excursion out of Mariposa down the lake to the Indian's Island out of sight in the morning mist. Talk of your Papal Zouaves and your Buckingham Palace Guard! I want to see the Mariposa band in uniform and the Mariposa Knights of Pythias with their aprons and their insignia and their picnic baskets and their five-cent cigars!

Half-past six in the morning, and all the crowd on the wharf and the boat due to leave in half an hour. Notice it!—in half an hour. Already she's whistled twice (at six, and at six fifteen), and at any minute now, Christie Johnson will step into the pilot house and pull the string for the warning whistle that the boat will leave in half an

hour. So keep ready. Don't think of running back to Smith's Hotel for the sandwiches. Don't be fool enough to try to go up to the Greek Store, next to Netley's, and buy fruit. You'll be left behind for sure if you do. Never mind the sandwiches and the fruit! Anyway, here comes Mr. Smith himself with a huge basket of provender that would feed a factory. There must be sandwiches in that. I think I can hear them clinking. And behind Mr. Smith is the German waiter from the caff with another basket—indubitably lager beer; and behind him, the bar-tender of the hotel, carrying nothing, as far as one can see. But of course if you know Mariposa you will understand that why he looks so nonchalant and empty-handed is because he has two bottles of rye whisky under his linen duster. You know, I think, the peculiar walk of a man with two bottles of whisky in the inside pockets of a linen coat. In Mariposa, you see, to bring beer to an excursion is quite in keeping with public opinion. But, whisky—well, one has to be a little careful.

Do I say that Mr. Smith is here? Why, everybody's here. There's Hussell, the editor of the *Newspacket*, wearing a blue ribbon on his coat, for the Mariposa Knights of Pythias are, by their constitution, dedicated to temperance and there's Henry Mullins, the manager of the Exchange Bank, also a Knight of Pythias, with a small flask of Pogram's Special in his hip pocket as a sort of amendment to the constitution. And there's Dean Drone, the Chaplain of the Order, with a fishing-rod (you never saw such green bass as lie among the rocks at Indian's Island), and with a trolling line in case of mask-nonge, and a landing net in case of pickerel, and with his eldest daughter, Lilian Drone, in case of young men. There never was such a fisherman as the Rev. Rupert Drone.

. . . . .

Perhaps I ought to explain that when I speak of the excursion as being of the Knights of Pythias, the thing must not be understood in any narrow sense. In Mariposa practically everybody belongs to the Knights of Pythias just as they do to everything else. That's the great thing about the town and that's what makes it so different from the city. Everybody is in everything.

You should see them on the seventeenth of March, for example, when everybody wears a green ribbon and they're all laughing and

glad—you know what the Celtic nature is—and talking about Home Rule.

On St. Andrew's Day every man in town wears a thistle and shakes hands with everybody else, and you see the fine old Scotch honesty beaming out of their eyes.

And on St. George's Day!—well, there's no heartiness like the good old English spirit, after all; why shouldn't a man feel glad that he's an Englishman?

Then on the Fourth of July there are stars and stripes flying over half the stores in town, and suddenly all the men are seen to smoke cigars, and to know all about Roosevelt and the Philippine Islands. Then you learn for the first time that Jeff Thorpe's people came from Massachusetts and that his uncle fought at Bunker Hill (it must have been Bunker Hill—anyway Jefferson will swear it was in Dakota all right enough); and you find that George Duff has a married sister in Rochester and that her husband is all right; in fact, George was down there as recently as eight years ago. Oh, it's the most American town imaginable is Mariposa—on the Fourth of July.

But wait, just wait, if you feel anxious about the solidity of the British connection, till the twelfth of the month, when everybody is wearing an orange streamer in his coat and the Orangemen (every man in town) walk in the big procession. Allegiance! Well, perhaps you remember the address they gave to the Prince of Wales on the platform of the Mariposa station as he went through on his tour to the west. I think that pretty well settled that question.

So you will easily understand that of course everybody belongs to the Knights of Pythias and the Masons and Odd Fellows, just as they all belong to the Snow Shoe Club and the Girls' Friendly Society.

And meanwhile the whistle of the steamer has blown again for a quarter to seven:—loud and long this time, for any one not here now is late for certain, unless he should happen to come down in the last fifteen minutes.

What a crowd upon the wharf and how they pile on to the steamer! It's a wonder that the boat can hold them all. But that's just the marvellous thing about the *Mariposa Belle*.

I don't know—I have never known—where the steamers like the *Mariposa Belle* come from. Whether they are built by Harland and Wolff of Belfast, or whether, on the other hand, they are not built by

Harland and Wolff of Belfast, is more than one would like to say offhand.

The *Mariposa Belle* always seems to me to have some of those strange properties that distinguish Mariposa itself. I mean, her size seems to vary so. If you see her there in the winter, frozen in the ice beside the wharf with a snowdrift against the windows of the pilot house, she looks a pathetic little thing the size of a butternut. But in the summer time, especially after you've been in Mariposa for a month or two, and have paddled alongside of her in a canoe, she gets larger and taller, and with a great sweep of black sides, till you see no difference between the *Mariposa Belle* and the *Lusitania*. Each one is a big steamer and that's all you can say.

Nor do her measurements help you much. She draws about eighteen inches forward, and more than that—at least half an inch more, astern, and when she's loaded down with an excursion crowd she draws a good two inches more. And above the water—why, look at all the decks on her! There's the deck you walk on to, from the wharf, all shut in, with windows along it, and the after cabin with the long table, and above that the deck with all the chairs piled upon it, and the deck in front where the band stand round in a circle, and the pilot house is higher than that, and above the pilot house is the board with the gold name and the flag pole and the steel ropes and the flags; and fixed in somewhere on the different levels is the lunch counter where they sell the sandwiches, and the engine room, and down below the deck level, beneath the water line, is the place where the crew sleep. What with steps and stairs and passages and piles of cordwood for the engine—oh, no, I guess Harland and Wolff didn't build her. They couldn't have.

Yet even with a huge boat like the *Mariposa Belle*, it would be impossible for her to carry all of the crowd that you see in the boat and on the wharf. In reality, the crowd is made up of two classes—all of the people in Mariposa who are going on the excursion and all those who are not. Some come for the one reason and some for the other.

The two tellers of the Exchange Bank are both there standing side by side. But one of them—the one with the cameo pin and the long face like a horse—is going, and the other—with the other cameo pin and the face like another horse—is not. In the same way,



Hussell of the *Newspacket* is going, but his brother, beside him, isn't. Lilian Drone is going, but her sister can't; and so on all through the crowd.

. . . . .

And to think that things should look like that on the morning of a steamboat accident.

How strange life is!

To think of all these people so eager and anxious to catch the steamer, and some of them running to catch it, and so fearful that they might miss it—the morning of a steamboat accident. And the captain blowing his whistle, and warning them so severely that he would leave them behind—leave them out of the accident! And everybody crowding so eagerly to be in the accident.

Perhaps life is like that all through.

Strangest of all to think, in a case like this, of the people who were left behind, or in some way or other prevented from going, and always afterwards told of how they had escaped being on board the *Mariposa Belle* that day!

Some of the instances were certainly extraordinary.

Nivens, the lawyer, escaped from being there merely by the fact that he was away in the city.

Towers, the tailor, only escaped owing to the fact that, not intending to go on the excursion he had stayed in bed till eight o'clock and so had not gone. He narrated afterwards that waking up that morning at half-past five, he had thought of the excursion and for some unaccountable reason had felt glad that he was not going.

. . . . .

The case of Yodel, the auctioneer, was even more inscrutable. He had been to the Odd Fellows' excursion on the train the week before and to the Conservative picnic the week before that, and had decided not to go on this trip. In fact, he had not the least intention of going. He narrated afterwards how the night before some one had stopped him on the corner of Nippewa and Tecumseh Streets (he indicated the very spot) and asked: "Are you going to take in the excursion to-morrow?" and he had said, just as simply as he was talking when narrating it: "No." And ten minutes after

that, at the corner of Dalhousie and Brock Streets (he offered to lead a party of verification to the precise place) somebody else had stopped him and asked: "Well, are you going on the steamer trip to-morrow?" Again he had answered: "No," apparently almost in the same tone as before.

He said afterwards that when he heard the rumour of the accident it seemed like the finger of Providence, and he fell on his knees in thankfulness.

There was the similar case of Morison (I mean the one in Glover's hardware store that married one of the Thompsons). He said afterwards that he had read so much in the papers about accidents lately—mining accidents, and aeroplanes and gasoline—that he had grown nervous. The night before his wife had asked him at supper: "Are you going on the excursion?" He had answered: "No, I don't think I feel like it," and had added: "Perhaps your mother might like to go." And the next evening just at dusk, when the news ran through the town, he said the first thought that flashed through his head was: "Mrs. Thompson's on that boat."

He told this right as I say it—without the least doubt or confusion. He never for a moment imagined she was on any other boat. He knew she was on this one. He said you could have knocked him down where he stood. But no one had. Not even when he got half-way down—on his knees, and it would have been easier still to knock him down or kick him. People do miss a lot of chances.

Still, as I say, neither Yodel nor Morison nor any one thought about there being an accident until just after sundown when they—

Well, have you ever heard the long booming whistle of a steamboat two miles out on the lake in the dusk, and while you listen and count and wonder, seen the crimson rockets going up against the sky and then heard the fire bell ringing right there beside you in the town, and seen the people running to the town wharf?

That's what the people of Mariposa saw and felt that summer evening as they watched the Mackinaw lifeboat go plunging out into the lake with seven sweeps to a side and the foam clear to the gunwale with the lifting stroke of fourteen men!

But, dear me, I am afraid that this is no way to tell a story. I suppose the true art would have been to have said nothing about the accident till it happened. But when you write about Mariposa, or

hear of it, if you know the place, it's all so vivid and real that a thing like the contrast between the excursion crowd in the morning and the scene at night leaps into your mind and you must think of it.

. . . . .

But never mind about the accident—let us turn back again to the morning.

The boat was due to leave at seven. There was no doubt about the hour—not only seven, but seven sharp. The notice in the *News-packet* said: "The boat will leave sharp at seven;" and the advertising posters on the telegraph poles on Missinaba Street that began, "Ho, for Indian's Island!" ended up with the words: "Boat leaves at seven sharp." There was a big notice on the wharf that said: "Boat leaves sharp on time."

So at seven, right on the hour, the whistle blew loud and long, and then at seven fifteen three short peremptory blasts, and at seven thirty one quick angry call—just one—and very soon after that they cast off the last of the ropes and the *Mariposa Belle* sailed off in her cloud of flags, and the band of the Knights of Pythias, timing it to a nicety, broke into the "Maple Leaf Forever!"

I suppose that all excursions when they start are much the same. Anyway, on the *Mariposa Belle* everybody went running up and down all over the boat with deck chairs and camp stools and baskets, and found places, splendid places to sit, and then got scared that there might be better ones and chased off again. People hunted for places out of the sun and when they got them swore that they weren't going to freeze to please anybody; and the people in the sun said that they hadn't paid fifty cents to be roasted. Others said that they hadn't paid fifty cents to get covered with cinders, and there were still others who hadn't paid fifty cents to get shaken to death with the propeller.

Still, it was all right presently. The people seemed to get sorted out into the places on the boat where they belonged. The women, the older ones, all gravitated into the cabin on the lower deck and by getting round the table with needlework, and with all the windows shut, they soon had it, as they said themselves, just like being at home.

All the young boys and the toughs and the men in the band got

down on the lower deck forward, where the boat was dirtiest and where the anchor was and the coils of rope.

And upstairs on the after deck there were Lilian Drone and Miss Lawson, the high school teacher, with a book of German poetry—Goethe I think it was—and the bank teller and the younger men.

In the centre, standing beside the rail, were Dean Drone and Dr. Gallagher, looking through binocular glasses at the shore.

Up in front on the little deck forward of the pilot house was a group of the older men, Mullins and Duff and Mr. Smith in a deck chair, and beside him Mr. Golgotha Gingham, the undertaker of Mariposa, on a stool. It was part of Mr. Gingham's principles to take in an outing of this sort, a business matter, more or less—for you never know what may happen at these water parties. At any rate, he was there in a neat suit of black, not, of course, his heavier or professional suit, but a soft clinging effect as of burnt paper that combined gaiety and decorum to a nicety.

“Yes,” said Mr. Gingham, waving his black glove in a general way towards the shore, “I know the lake well, very well. I’ve been pretty much all over it in my time.”

“Canoeing?” asked somebody.

“No,” said Mr. Gingham, “not in a canoe.” There seemed a peculiar and quiet meaning in his tone.

“Sailing, I suppose,” said somebody else.

“No,” said Mr. Gingham. “I don’t understand it.”

“I never knowed that you went on to the water at all, Gol,” said Mr. Smith, breaking in.

“Ah, not now,” explained Mr. Gingham; “it was years ago, the first summer I came to Mariposa. I was on the water practically all day. Nothing like it to give a man an appetite and keep him in shape.”

“Was you camping?” asked Mr. Smith.

“We camped at night,” assented the undertaker, “but we put in practically the whole day on the water. You see we were after a party that had gone up here from the city on his vacation and gone out in a sailing canoe. We were dragging. We were up every morning at sunrise, lit a fire on the beach and cooked breakfast, and then we’d light our pipes and be off with the net for a whole day. It’s a great



life," concluded Mr. Gingham wistfully.

"Did you get him?" asked two or three together.

There was a pause before Mr. Gingham answered.

"We did," he said, "down in the reeds past Horseshoe Point. But it was no use. He turned blue on me right away."

After which Mr. Gingham fell into such a deep reverie that the boat had steamed another half-mile down the lake before anybody broke the silence again.

Talk of this sort—and after all what more suitable for a day on the water?—beguiled the way.

Down the lake, mile by mile over the calm water, steamed the *Mariposa Belle*. They passed Poplar Point where the high sand-banks are with all the swallows' nests in them, and Dean Drone and Dr. Gallagher looked at them alternately through the binocular glasses, and it was wonderful how plainly one could see the swallows and the banks and the shrubs—just as plainly as with the naked eye.

And a little further down they passed the Shingle Beach, and Dr. Gallagher, who knew Canadian history, said to Dean Drone that it was strange to think that Champlain had landed there with his French explorers three hundred years ago; and Dean Drone, who didn't know Canadian history, said it was stranger still to think that the hand of the Almighty had piled up the hills and rocks long before that; and Dr. Gallagher said it was wonderful how the French had found their way through such a pathless wilderness; and Dean Drone said that it was wonderful also to think that the Almighty had placed even the smallest shrub in its appointed place. Dr. Gallagher said it filled him with admiration. Dean Drone said it filled him with awe. Dr. Gallagher said he'd been full of it ever since he was a boy; and Dean Drone said so had he.

Then a little further, as the *Mariposa Belle* steamed on down the lake, they passed the Old Indian Portage where the great grey rocks are; and Dr. Gallagher drew Dean Drone's attention to the place where the narrow canoe track wound up from the shore to the woods, and Dean Drone said he could see it perfectly well without the glasses.

Dr. Gallagher said that it was just here that a party of five hundred French had made their way with all their baggage and accou-



trements across the rocks of the divide and down to the Great Bay. And Dean Drone said that it reminded him of Xenophon leading his ten thousand Greeks over the hill passes of Armenia down to the sea. Dr. Gallagher said that he had often wished he could have seen and spoken to Champlain, and Dean Drone said how much he regretted to have never known Xenophon.

And then after that they fell to talking of relics and traces of the past, and Dr. Gallagher said that if Dean Drone would come round to his house some night he would show him some Indian arrow heads that he had dug up in his garden. And Dean Drone said that if Dr. Gallagher would come round to the rectory any afternoon he would show him a map of Xerxes' invasion of Greece. Only he must come some time between the Infant Class and the Mothers' Auxiliary.

So presently they both knew that they were blocked out of one another's houses for some time to come, and Dr. Gallagher walked forward and told Mr. Smith, who had never studied Greek, about Champlain crossing the rock divide.

Mr. Smith turned his head and looked at the divide for half a second and then said he had crossed a worse one up north back of the Wahnipitae and that the flies were Hades—and then went on playing freeze out poker with the two juniors in Duff's bank.

So Dr. Gallagher realized that that's always the way when you try to tell people things, and that as far as gratitude and appreciation goes one might as well never read books or travel anywhere or do anything.

In fact, it was at this very moment that he made up his mind to give the arrows to the Mariposa Mechanics' Institute—they afterwards became, as you know, the Gallagher Collection. But, for the time being, the doctor was sick of them and wandered off round the boat and watched Henry Mullins showing George Duff how to make a John Collins without lemons, and finally went and sat down among the Mariposa band and wished that he hadn't come.

So the boat steamed on and the sun rose higher and higher, and the freshness of the morning changed into the full glare of noon, and they went on to where the lake began to narrow in at its foot, just where the Indian's Island is—all grass and trees and with a log wharf running into the water. Below it the Lower Ossawippi runs

out of the lake, and quite near are the rapids, and you can see down among the trees the red brick of the power house and hear the roar of the leaping water.

The Indian's Island itself is all covered with trees and tangled vines, and the water about it is so still that it's all reflected double and looks the same either way up. Then when the steamer's whistle blows as it comes into the wharf, you hear it echo among the trees of the island, and reverberate back from the shores of the lake.

The scene is all so quiet and still and unbroken, that Miss Cleg-horn—the sallow girl in the telephone exchange—said she'd like to be buried there. But all the people were so busy getting their baskets and gathering up their things that no one had time to attend to it.

I mustn't even try to describe the landing and the boat crunching against the wooden wharf and all the people running to the same side of the deck and Christie Johnson calling out to the crowd to keep to the starboard and nobody being able to find it. Every one who has been on a Mariposa excursion knows all about that.

Nor can I describe the day itself and the picnic under the trees. There were speeches afterwards, and Judge Pepperleigh gave such offence by bringing in Conservative politics that a man called Patriotus Canadiensis wrote and asked for some of the invaluable space of the Mariposa *Times-Herald* and exposed it.

I should say that there were races too, on the grass on the open side of the island, graded mostly according to ages—races for boys under thirteen and girls over nineteen and all that sort of thing. Sports are generally conducted on that plan in Mariposa. It is realized that a woman of sixty has an unfair advantage over a mere child.

Dean Drone managed the races and decided the ages and gave out the prizes; the Wesleyan minister helped, and he and the young student, who was relieving in the Presbyterian Church, held the string at the winning point.

They had to get mostly clergymen for the races because all the men had wandered off, somehow, to where they were drinking lager beer out of two kegs stuck on pine logs among the trees.

But if you've ever been on a Mariposa excursion you know all about these details anyway.

So the day wore on and presently the sun came through the trees

on a slant and the steamer whistle blew with a great puff of white steam and all the people came straggling down to the wharf and pretty soon the *Mariposa Belle* had floated out on to the lake again and headed for the town, twenty miles away.

I suppose you have often noticed the contrast there is between an excursion on its way out in the morning and what it looks like on the way home.

In the morning everybody is so restless and animated and moves to and fro all over the boat and asks questions. But coming home, as the afternoon gets later and later and the sun sinks beyond the hills, all the people seem to get so still and quiet and drowsy.

So it was with the people on the *Mariposa Belle*. They sat there on the benches and the deck chairs in little clusters, and listened to the regular beat of the propeller and almost dozed off asleep as they sat. Then when the sun set and the dusk drew on, it grew almost dark on the deck and so still that you could hardly tell there was any one on board.

And if you had looked at the steamer from the shore or from one of the islands, you'd have seen the row of lights from the cabin windows shining on the water and the red glare of the burning hemlock from the funnel, and you'd have heard the soft thud of the propeller miles away over the lake.

Now and then, too, you could have heard them singing on the steamer—the voices of the girls and the men blended into unison by the distance, rising and falling in long-drawn melody: “O—*Can-a-da*—O—*Can-a-da*.”

You may talk as you will about the intoning choirs of your European cathedrals, but the sound of “O *Can-a-da*,” borne across the waters of a silent lake at evening is good enough for those of us who know *Mariposa*.

I think that it was just as they were singing like this: “O—*Can-a-da*,” that word went round that the boat was sinking.

If you have ever been in any sudden emergency on the water, you will understand the strange psychology of it—the way in which what is happening seems to become known all in a moment without a word being said. The news is transmitted from one to the other by some mysterious process.

At any rate, on the *Mariposa Belle* first one and then the other heard that the steamer was sinking. As far as I could ever learn the first of it was that George Duff, the bank manager, came very quietly to Dr. Gallagher and asked him if he thought that the boat was sinking. The doctor said no, that he had thought so earlier in the day but that he didn't now think that she was.

After that Duff, according to his own account, had said to Macartney, the lawyer, that the boat was sinking, and Macartney said that he doubted it very much.

Then somebody came to Judge Pepperleigh and woke him up and said that there was six inches of water in the steamer and that she was sinking. And Pepperleigh said it was perfect scandal and passed the news on to his wife and she said that they had no business to allow it and that if the steamer sank that was the last excursion she'd go on.

So the news went all round the boat and everywhere the people gathered in groups and talked about it in the angry and excited way that people have when a steamer is sinking on one of the lakes like Lake Wissanotti.

Dean Drone, of course, and some others were quieter about it, and said that one must make allowances and that naturally there were two sides to everything. But most of them wouldn't listen to reason at all. I think, perhaps, that some of them were frightened. You see the last time but one that the steamer had sunk, there had been a man drowned and it made them nervous.

What? Hadn't I explained about the depth of Lake Wissanotti? I had taken it for granted that you knew; and in any case parts of it are deep enough, though I don't suppose in this stretch of it from the big reed beds up to within a mile of the town wharf, you could find six feet of water in it if you tried. Oh, pshaw! I was not talking about a steamer sinking in the ocean and carrying down its screaming crowds of people into the hideous depths of green water. Oh, dear me, no! That kind of thing never happens on Lake Wissanotti.

But what does happen is that the *Mariposa Belle* sinks every now and then, and sticks there on the bottom till they get things straightened up.

On the lakes round Mariposa, if a person arrives late anywhere



and explains that the steamer sank everybody understands the situation.

You see when Harland and Wolff built the *Mariposa Belle*, they left some cracks in between the timbers that you fill up with cotton waste every Sunday. If this is not attended to, the boat sinks. In fact, it is part of the law of the province that all the steamers like the *Mariposa Belle* must be properly corked—I think that is the word—every season. There are inspectors who visit all the hotels in the province to see that it is done.

So you can imagine now that I've explained it a little straighter, the indignation of the people when they knew that the boat had come uncorked and that they might be stuck out there on a shoal or a mud-bank half the night.

I don't say either that there wasn't any danger; anyway, it doesn't feel very safe when you realize that the boat is settling down with every hundred yards that she goes, and you look over the side and see only the black water in the gathering night.

Safe! I'm not sure now that I come to think of it that it isn't worse than sinking in the Atlantic. After all, in the Atlantic there is wireless telegraphy, and a lot of trained sailors and stewards. But out on Lake Wissanotti—far out, so that you can only just see the lights of the town away off to the south—when the propeller comes to a stop—and you can hear the hiss of steam as they start to rake out the engine fires to prevent an explosion—and when you turn from the red glare that comes from the furnace doors as they open them, to the black dark that is gathering over the lake—and there's a night wind beginning to run among the rushes—and you see the men going forward to the roof of the pilot house to send up the rockets to rouse the town—safe? Safe yourself, if you like; as for me, let me once get back into *Mariposa* again, under the night shadow of the maple trees, and this shall be the last, last time I'll go on Lake Wissanotti.

Safe! Oh, yes! Isn't it strange how safe other people's adventures seem after they happen? But you'd have been scared, too, if you'd been there just before the steamer sank, and seen them bringing up all the women on to the top deck.

I don't see how some of the people took it so calmly; how Mr. Smith, for instance, could have gone on smoking and telling how



he'd had a steamer "sink on him" on Lake Nipissing and a still bigger one, a side-wheeler, sink on him in Lake Abbitibbi.

Then, quite suddenly, with a quiver, down she went. You could feel the boat sink, sink—down, down—would it never get to the bottom? The water came flush up to the lower deck, and then—thank heaven—the sinking stopped and there was the *Mariposa Belle* safe and tight on a reed bank.

Really, it made one positively laugh! It seemed so queer and, anyway, if a man has a sort of natural courage, danger makes him laugh. Danger? pshaw! fiddlesticks! everybody scouted the idea. Why, it is just the little things like this that give zest to a day on the water.

Within half a minute they were all running round looking for sandwiches and cracking jokes and talking of making coffee over the remains of the engine fires.

I don't need to tell at length how it all happened after that.

I suppose the people on the *Mariposa Belle* would have had to settle down there all night or till help came from the town, but some of the men who had gone forward and were peering out into the dark said that it couldn't be more than a mile across the water to Miller's Point. You could almost see it over there to the left—some of them, I think, said "off on the port bow," because you know when you get mixed up in these marine disasters, you soon catch the atmosphere of the thing.

So pretty soon they had the davits swung out over the side and were lowering the old lifeboat from the top deck into the water.

There were men leaning out over the rail of the *Mariposa Belle* with lanterns that threw the light as they let her down, and the glare fell on the water and the reeds. But when they got the boat lowered, it looked such a frail, clumsy thing as one saw it from the rail above, that the cry was raised: "Women and children first!" For what was the sense, if it should turn out that the boat wouldn't even hold women and children, of trying to jam a lot of heavy men into it?

So they put in mostly women and children and the boat pushed out into the darkness so freighted down it would hardly float.

In the bow of it was the Presbyterian student who was relieving the minister, and he called out that they were in the hands of Provi-

dence. But he was crouched and ready to spring out of them at the first moment.

So the boat went and was lost in the darkness except for the lantern in the bow that you could see bobbing on the water. Then presently it came back and they sent another load, till pretty soon the decks began to thin out and everybody got impatient to be gone.

It was about the time that the third boatload put off that Mr. Smith took a bet with Mullins for twenty-five dollars, that he'd be home in *Mariposa* before the people in the boats had walked round the shore.

No one knew just what he meant, but pretty soon they saw Mr. Smith disappear down below into the lowest part of the steamer with a mallet in one hand and a big bundle of marline in the other.

They might have wondered more about it, but it was just at this time that they heard the shouts from the rescue boat—the big Mackinaw lifeboat—that had put out from the town with fourteen men at the sweeps when they saw the first rockets go up.

I suppose there is always something inspiring about a rescue at sea, or on the water.

After all, the bravery of the lifeboat man is the true bravery—expended to save life, not to destroy it.

Certainly they told for months after of how the rescue boat came out to the *Mariposa Belle*.

I suppose that when they put her in the water the lifeboat touched it for the first time since the old Macdonald Government placed her on Lake Wissanotti.

Anyway, the water poured in at every seam. But not for a moment—even with two miles of water between them and the steamer—did the rowers pause for that.

By the time they were half-way there the water was almost up to the thwarts, but they drove her on. Panting and exhausted (for mind you, if you haven't been in a fool boat like that for years, rowing takes it out of you), the rowers stuck to their task. They threw the ballast over and chucked into the water the heavy cork jackets and lifebelts that encumbered their movements. There was no thought of turning back. They were nearer to the steamer than the shore.

"Hang to it, boys," called the crowd from the steamer's deck, and hang they did.

They were almost exhausted when they got them; men leaning from the steamer threw them ropes and one by one every man was hauled aboard just as the lifeboat sank under their feet.

Saved! by Heaven, saved by one of the smartest pieces of rescue work ever seen on the lake.

There's no use describing it; you need to see rescue work of this kind by lifeboats to understand it.

Nor were the lifeboat crew the only ones that distinguished themselves.

Boat after boat and canoe after canoe had put out from Mariposa to the help of the steamer. They got them all.

Pupkin, the other bank teller, with a face like a horse, who hadn't gone on the excursion—as soon as he knew that the boat was signalling for help and that Miss Lawson was sending up rockets—rushed for a row boat, grabbed an oar (two would have hampered him), and paddled madly out into the lake. He struck right out into the dark with the crazy skiff almost sinking beneath his feet. But they got him. They rescued him. They watched him, almost dead with exhaustion, make his way to the steamer, where he was hauled up with ropes. Saved! Saved!

They might have gone on that way half the night, picking up the rescuers, only, at the very moment when the tenth load of people left for the shore—just as suddenly and saucily as you please, up came the *Mariposa Belle* from the mud bottom and floated.

FLOATED?

Why, of course she did. If you take a hundred and fifty people off a steamer that has sunk, and if you get a man as shrewd as Mr. Smith to plug the timber seams with mallet and marline, and if you turn ten bandsmen of the Mariposa band on to your hand pump on the bow of the lower decks—float? why, what else can she do?

Then, if you stuff in hemlock into the embers of the fire that you were raking out, till it hums and crackles under the boiler, it won't be long before you hear the propeller thud-thudding at the stern again, and before the long roar of the steam whistle echoes over to the town.

And so the *Mariposa Belle*, with all steam up again and with the long train of sparks careering from the funnel, is heading for the town.

But no Christie Johnson at the wheel in the pilot house this time. "Smith! Get Smith!" is the cry.

Can he take her in? Well, now! Ask a man who has had steamers sink on him in half the lakes from Temiscaming to the Bay, if he can take her in? Ask a man who has run a York boat down the rapids of the Moose when the ice is moving, if he can grip the steering wheel of the *Mariposa Belle*? So there she steams safe and sound to the town wharf!

Look at the lights and the crowd! If only the federal census taker could count us now! Hear them calling and shouting back and forward from the deck to the shore! Listen! There is the rattle of the shore ropes as they get them ready, and there's the Mariposa band—actually forming in a circle on the upper deck just as she docks, and the leader with his baton—one—two—ready now—

"O—CAN-A-DA!"

## HOW WE KEPT MOTHER'S DAY

OF all the different ideas that have been started lately, I think that the very best is the notion of celebrating once a year "Mother's Day." I don't wonder that May the eleventh is becoming such a popular date all over America and I am sure the idea will spread to England too.

It is especially in a big family like ours that such an idea takes hold. So we decided to have a special celebration of Mother's Day. We thought it a fine idea. It made us all realize how much Mother had done for us for years, and all the efforts and sacrifice that she had made for our sake.

So we decided that we'd make it a great day, a holiday for all the family, and do everything we could to make Mother happy. Father decided to take a holiday from his office, so as to help in celebrating the day, and my sister Anne and I stayed home from college classes, and Mary and my brother Will stayed home from High School.

It was our plan to make it a day just like Xmas or any big holiday, and so we decided to decorate the house with flowers and with mottoes over the mantelpieces, and all that kind of thing. We got Mother to make mottoes and arrange the decorations, because she always does it at Xmas.

The two girls thought it would be a nice thing to dress in our very best for such a big occasion, and so they both got new hats. Mother trimmed both the hats, and they looked fine, and Father had bought four-in-hand silk ties for himself and us boys as a souvenir of the day to remember Mother by. We were going to get Mother a new hat too, but it turned out that she seemed to really like her old grey bonnet better than a new one, and both the girls said that it was awfully becoming to her.

Well, after breakfast we had it arranged as a surprise for Mother that we would hire a motor car and take her for a beautiful drive away into the country. Mother is hardly ever able to have a treat



like that, because we can only afford to keep one maid, and so Mother is busy in the house nearly all the time. And of course the country is so lovely now that it would be just grand for her to have a lovely morning, driving for miles and miles.

But on the very morning of the day we changed the plan a little bit, because it occurred to Father that a thing it would be better to do even than to take Mother for a motor drive would be to take her fishing. Father said that as the car was hired and paid for, we might just as well use it for a drive up into hills where the streams are. As Father said, if you just go out driving without any object, you have a sense of aimlessness, but if you are going to fish, there is a definite purpose in front of you to heighten the enjoyment.

So we all felt that it would be nicer for Mother to have a definite purpose; and anyway, it turned out that Father had just got a new rod the day before, which made the idea of fishing all the more appropriate, and he said that Mother could use it if she wanted to; in fact, he said it was practically for her, only Mother said she would much rather watch him fish and not try to fish herself.

So we got everything arranged for the trip, and we got Mother to cut up some sandwiches and make up a sort of lunch in case we got hungry, though of course we were to come back home again to a big dinner in the middle of the day, just like Xmas or New Year's Day. Mother packed it all up in a basket for us ready to go in the motor.

Well, when the car came to the door, it turned out that there hardly seemed as much room in it as we had supposed, because we hadn't reckoned on Father's fishing basket and the rods and the lunch, and it was plain enough that we couldn't all get in.

Father said not to mind him, he said that he could just as well stay home, and that he was sure that he could put in the time working in the garden; he said that there was a lot of rough dirty work that he could do, like digging a trench for the garbage, that would save hiring a man, and so he said that he'd stay home; he said that we were not to let the fact of his not having had a real holiday for three years stand in our way; he wanted us to go right ahead and be happy and have a big day, and not to mind him. He said that he could plug away all day, and in fact he said he'd been a fool to think there'd be any holiday for him.

But of course we all felt that it would never do to let Father stay home, especially as we knew he would make trouble if he did. The two girls, Anne and Mary, would gladly have stayed and helped the maid get dinner, only it seemed such a pity to, on a lovely day like this, having their new hats. But they both said that Mother had only to say the word, and they'd gladly stay home and work. Will and I would have dropped out, but unfortunately we wouldn't have been any use in getting the dinner.

So in the end it was decided that Mother would stay home and just have a lovely restful day round the house, and get the dinner. It turned out anyway that Mother doesn't care for fishing, and also it was just a little bit cold and fresh out of doors, though it was lovely and sunny, and Father was rather afraid that Mother might take cold if she came.

He said he would never forgive himself if he dragged Mother round the country and let her take a severe cold at a time when she might be having a beautiful rest. He said it was our duty to try and let Mother get all the rest and quiet that she could, after all that she had done for all of us, and he said that that was principally why he had fallen in with this idea of a fishing trip, so as to give Mother a little quiet. He said that young people seldom realize how much quiet means to people who are getting old. As to himself, he could still stand the racket, but he was glad to shelter Mother from it.

So we all drove away with three cheers for Mother, and Mother stood and watched us from the verandah for as long as she could see us, and Father waved his hand back to her every few minutes till he hit his hand on the back edge of the car, and then said that he didn't think that Mother could see us any longer.

Well, we had the loveliest day up among the hills that you could possibly imagine, and Father caught such big specimens that he felt sure that Mother couldn't have landed them anyway, if she had been fishing for them, and Will and I fished too, though we didn't get so many as Father, and the two girls met quite a lot of people that they knew as we drove along, and there were some young men friends of theirs that they met along the stream and talked to, and so we all had a splendid time.

It was quite late when we got back, nearly seven o'clock in the

evening, but Mother had guessed that we would be late, so she had kept back the dinner so as to have it just nicely ready and hot for us. Only first she had to get towels and soap for Father and clean things for him to put on, because he always gets so messed up with fishing, and that kept Mother busy for a little while, that and helping the girls get ready.

But at last everything was ready, and we sat down to the grandest kind of dinner—roast turkey and all sorts of things like on Xmas Day. Mother had to get up and down a good bit during the meal fetching things back and forward, but at the end Father noticed it and said she simply mustn't do it, that he wanted her to spare herself, and he got up and fetched the walnuts over from the sideboard himself.

The dinner lasted a long while, and was great fun, and when it was over all of us wanted to help clear the things up and wash the dishes, only Mother said that she would really much rather do it, and so we let her, because we wanted just for once to humour her.

It was quite late when it was all over, and when we all kissed Mother before going to bed, she said it had been the most wonderful day in her life, and I think there were tears in her eyes. So we all felt awfully repaid for all that we had done.

## WHY I AM LEAVING MY FARM

*(A Lunch Club Talk that was designed to stop the Back to the Land Movement. It killed it dead.)*

**M**Y! But these farmers are wonderful fellows—I mean the words they use and the education they must have! I never realized it till just recently when I retired from being a professor and came to settle down on my little place that I call a farm.

I hadn't had anything to do with a farm since I lived on one as a little boy, more than fifty years ago. I am amazed at the change! I'm not sufficiently educated for it. I'll have to go back to the city.

I mean like this—a few days ago I bought a bottle of poison to use against garden bugs, and it had on the label, "The antidote to this poison is any alkali emetic followed by an emollient febrifuge"! Just think of it! Imagine a farmer's wife calling downstairs: "William! Baby has been eating shoeblacking! Throw me up an alkali emetic and follow it with an emollient febrifuge." And the farmer would probably call back: "All right. And you'd better handle baby very carefully. Lift him up with callipers."

That's another word on farmers' labels, "callipers"; directions for all seeds and things say, "Handle very carefully and pick up with a pair of callipers." Up till now I always thought that callipers were French things that women wear. But it seems not. . . .

Anyway you have to have them on a farm. I'm going to get measured for a pair right away.

This high standard of education—I mean this need of knowledge of special terms—makes it hard for any outsider to start in and do anything around the house and garden. You see, on a farm, everything is done from printed directions, either out of little manuals or from papers that come with the packet or round the bottle or under the wrapper.

When I took over my place, as it was meant to be my home for



good, I thought I would begin by planting trees round it for shelter. From what I remember of farming when I was young, I naturally thought of spruce trees, and balsam and pine—any kind of fir trees. But it seems they don't have them. The book said, "The snuggest effect about the dwelling house is to be got by having a warm belt of *conifers* about it." I don't want them. All I remember about conifers, if I have the word right, is that if they once get into the frame of a bed or bedroom chest of drawers all you can do is to burn it. You can of course try poison, any good unguent or emollient, but it seldom works. The conifers could be lifted out one by one by callipers, but it would take a lot of time. The book says, "If set out when quite young they will increase rapidly." I don't doubt it, but, thank you, not for me.

The same manual suggested that if a belt of conifers was not available an equally snug effect can be made by covering the loggia with eucalyptus. "Loggia" is a new word for me, though I suppose I can guess what it refers to. Personally I would just give it a coat of whitewash.

I have found already that gardening has to go the same way as planting trees. I don't understand the words. Try this:

"Nitrates may be freely used with leguminous plants" . . . "at the time of calyx closing watch closely for curculio" . . . "remember that the ranunculus is the gardener's friend" . . . "among the birds all the caprimulgidae are well worth having, while the flickers wage war on larvae" . . . etc. It seems that farmers eat up this kind of language by the paragraph.

There was an old man working in the next lot to my place on the first day of gardening, and I asked him what he thought of the weather. In the days when I was young such an old man would have said:

"Well, sir, if them clouds would clear away off the sun for a bit I think it might set in for a pretty fair spell."

But this old man didn't.

He said:

"I had a look at my aneroid barometer first thing this morning and there is certainly an area of pretty low barometric pressure. I had been thinking of setting some antirrhinum this morning, but I guess I won't."



"Why not?" I asked.

"It's too aquaceous. You've got to keep a pretty good eye on your humidity gauge before you do much with antirrhinum. I'll put in something a little more gelatinous."

Think of it. That old man getting out of bed and having a look at his aneroid before he even put on his pants.

I was going to ask him what he would do instead of setting out antirrhinum, but then I didn't. I didn't need to. I knew what he would do.

He would go out and start to do all those things that are in the Farm and Home Manuals and on the seed packets and that I can't understand. For instance, he might go and make himself "a compost bed." Don't ask me what it is; I've no idea, except that it is said to be a grand thing to make with an eye to the future. "Soap suds, dirty water and all kinds of kitchen slops thrown on the compost bed will help to keep it in good heart." It sounds like a dirty enough mess.

Or if the old man didn't make a compost bed, then he might spend his time "treating his soil" with nitrate, phosphorus or basic slag. "What are they?" I don't know. "Where do you get basic slag?" I have no idea.

Then, if the old man had done that, he could go and plant his garden—with what, do you think—lettuce, radishes and that sort of stuff that I had expected to grow?—not at all. They don't have them any more. He could plant it with antirrhinum, as I have just said, and scabies, and cuspis and a border of asbestos and scrofula. Those are the words on the packets, as nearly as I recall them.

So, as for gardening, I'm out of it. I don't understand the terms.

"When the garden is complete," suggests the manual, "a final touch may be given by laying down a flagstone path, with saxifrage in the interstices, and then having a pergola all down the pathway." Thank you, not for me.

Another thing I had looked forward to in coming back to farm life, after fifty years away from it, was the reading of the good old farm newspapers. They've been parodied, I know, a thousand times by smart city people; but the charm was there all the same. There was personal news that said, "Ed Callagher was in town last night from the Fourth Concession and reports his fall wheat nicely in

hand. Well done! Ed"; and the social news, "Miss Posie Cowslip of Price's Corners is home after a three days' visit in the city."

In the place of that you now read:

"Among the daintiest of the season's weddings was that of Miss Poinsettia Primrose, celebrated at the family Farmstead, The Bag-nolias, the happy bridegroom being Mr. Earl DeBenture of Wall Street. The ceremony, at which the Rev. Mr. Bray officiated, was held out of doors under a pergola, the assembled guests being gathered in the loggia, beautified with floral decorations of bubiscus, rabies and flowering avunculus. Miss Primrose wore a beautiful écrin of soft tulle shot with dainty écrus. Her father, who gave her away, wore a plain vignolette of haricot while Mrs. Primrose (mère) looked riante in a dark purple chassis de nacre. The happy couple left immediately after the ceremony for a wedding tour through the Panama Canal."

. . . . .

I find I don't talk much to the neighbours. I can't. One of them, a young farmer from near by, dropped in the other day to ask if I could lend him a pair of callipers to reset his seismograph, and we had a little talk. He talked a little while on surrealism which he said had been interesting him lately; he spoke also of metampsy-chosis and then drifted onto foreign politics and the "open door" in Manchuria. I think it was in Manchuria; it may have been Missouri.

. . . . .

No, no. I'll have to go back and study a whole lot more and learn all about alkalis and barometers and callipers: or else perhaps not come to the country but retire into a beer garden. It's easier.

## WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER

I WANT my photograph taken," I said. The photographer looked at me without enthusiasm. He was a drooping man in a grey suit, with the dim eye of a natural scientist. But there is no need to describe him. Everybody knows what a photographer is like.

"Sit there," he said, "and wait."

I waited an hour. I read the *Ladies Companion* for 1912, the *Girls Magazine* for 1902 and the *Infants Journal* for 1888. I began to see that I had done an unwarrantable thing in breaking in on the privacy of this man's scientific pursuits with a face like mine.

After an hour the photographer opened the inner door.

"Come in," he said severely.

I went into the studio.

"Sit down," said the photographer.

I sat down in a beam of sunlight filtered through a sheet of factory cotton hung against a frosted skylight.

The photographer rolled a machine into the middle of the room and crawled into it from behind.

He was only in it a second—just time enough for one look at me—and then he was out again, tearing at the cotton sheet and the window panes with a hooked stick, apparently frantic for light and air.

Then he crawled back into the machine again and drew a little black cloth over himself. This time he was very quiet in there. I knew that he was praying and I kept still.

When the photographer came out at last, he looked very grave and shook his head.

"The face is quite wrong," he said.

"I know," I answered quietly; "I have always known it."

He sighed.

"I think," he said, "the face would be better three-quarters full."

"I'm sure it would," I said enthusiastically, for I was glad to find

that the man had such a human side to him. "So would yours. In fact," I continued, "how many faces one sees that are apparently hard, narrow, limited, but the minute you get them three-quarters full they get wide, large, almost boundless in—"

But the photographer had ceased to listen. He came over and took my head in his hands and twisted it sideways. I thought he meant to kiss me, and I closed my eyes.

But I was wrong.

He twisted my face as far as it would go and then stood looking at it.

He sighed again.

"I don't like the head," he said.

Then he went back to the machine and took another look.

"Open the mouth a little," he said.

I started to do so.

"Close it," he added quickly.

Then he looked again.

"The ears are *bad*," he said; "droop them a little more. Thank you. Now the eyes. Roll them in under the lids. Put the hands on the knees, please, and turn the face just a little upward. Yes, that's better. Now just expand the lungs! So! And hump the neck—that's it—and just contract the waist—ha!—and twist the hip up toward the elbow—now! I still don't quite like the face, it's just a trifle *too* full, but—"

I swung myself round on the stool.

"Stop," I said with emotion but, I think, with dignity. "This face is *my* face. It is not yours, it is mine. I've lived with it for forty years and I know its faults. I know it's out of drawing. I know it wasn't made for me, but it's *my* face, the only one I have—" I was conscious of a break in my voice but I went on—"such as it is, I've learned to love it. And this is my mouth, not yours. These ears are *mine*, and if your machine is too narrow—" Here I started to rise from the seat.

Snick!

The photographer had pulled a string. The photograph taken. I could see the machine still staggering from the shock.

"I think," said the photographer, pursing his lips in a pleased smile, "that I caught the features just in a moment of animation."

"So!" I said bitingly—"features, eh? You didn't think I could ani-

mate them, I suppose? But let me see the picture."

"Oh, there's nothing to see yet," he said, "I have to develop the negative first. Come back on Saturday and I'll let you see a proof of it."

On Saturday I went back.

The photographer beckoned me in. I thought he seemed quieter and graver than before. I think, too, there was a certain pride in his manner.

He unfolded the proof of a large photograph, and we both looked at it in silence.

"Is it me?" I asked.

"Yes," he said quietly, "it is you," and we went on looking at it.

"The eyes," I said hesitatingly, "don't look very much like mine."

"Oh, no," he answered, "I've retouched them. They come out splendidly, don't they?"

"Fine," I said, "but surely my eyebrows are not like that?"

"No," said the photographer, with a momentary glance at my face, "the eyebrows are removed. We have a process now—the Delphide—for putting in new ones. You'll notice here where we've applied it to carry the hair away from the brow. I don't like the hair low on the skull."

"Oh, you don't, don't you?" I said.

"No," he went on, "I don't care for it. I like to get the hair clear back to the superficies and make out a new brow line."

"What about the mouth?" I said with a bitterness that was lost on the photographer; "is that mine?"

"It's adjusted a little," he said, "yours is too low. I found I couldn't use it."

"The ears, though," I said, "strike me as a good likeness; they're just like mine."

"Yes," said the photographer thoughtfully, "that's so; but I can fix that all right in the print. We have a process now—the Sulphide—for removing the ears entirely. I'll see if—"

"Listen!" I interrupted, drawing myself up and animating my features to their full extent and speaking with a withering scorn that should have blasted the man on the spot. "Listen! I came here for a photograph—a picture—something which (mad though it seems) would have looked like me. I wanted something that would depict



my face as Heaven gave it to me, humble though the gift may have been. I wanted something that my friends might keep after my death, to reconcile them to my loss. It seems that I was mistaken. What I wanted is no longer done. Go on, then, with your brutal work. Take your negative, or whatever it is you call it—dip it in sulphide, bromide, oxide, cowhide—anything you like—remove the eyes, correct the mouth, adjust the face, restore the lips, reanimate the necktie and reconstruct the waistcoat. Coat it with an inch of gloss, shade it, emboss it, gild it, till even you acknowledge that it is finished. Then when you have done all that—keep it for yourself and your friends. They may value it. To me it is but a worthless bauble.”

I broke into tears and left.

## FIRST CALL FOR SPRING

I GATHER that spring is approaching. I am not an observant man, but as the days go by, the signs begin to multiply. Even for me that means that spring is at hand.

I take this early occasion to notify the public of my opinion and to support it with collateral facts. I am anxious this year to be among the first in the field. Among the signs on which I base my views that spring is near, I may mention that I observe that the snow has gone: that the income tax declarations are being distributed at the post-office; and that the sign BOCK BEER is hung out.

Spring then is upon us. The first call for spring has come: and I should like to suggest that this year we meet it firmly and quietly and with none of the hysterical outburst that it usually provokes in people of a certain temperament. I refer to those unfortunate beings called "lovers of nature."

Each year I have been pained to notice that the approach of spring occasions a most distressing aberration in the conduct of many of my friends. Beside my house, a few doors on the right, I have an acquaintance who is a Nature Man. All through the winter he is fairly quiet, and an agreeable friendly fellow, quite fit for general society. I notice him, it is true, occasionally grubbing under the snow. I have once or twice seen him break off a frozen twig from a tree, and examine it. On one occasion, indeed, last winter he was temporarily unmanned by seeing a black bird (otherwise harmless) sitting on a bough. But for the most part his conduct during the colder weather is entirely normal.

Spring, however, at once occasions in my Nature friend a distressing disturbance. He seems suddenly to desire, at our every meeting, to make himself a channel of information as between the animate world and me. From the moment that the snow begins to melt, he keeps me posted as to what the plants and the birds and the bees are doing. This is a class of information which I do not want, and

which I cannot use. But I have to bear it.

My Nature friend passes me every morning with some new and bright piece of information: something that he thinks so cheery that it irradiates his face. "I saw a finch this morning," he says. "Did you," I answer. "I noticed a scarlet tanager this afternoon," says my friend. "You don't say so!" I reply. What a tanager is I have never known: I hope I never shall. When my Nature friend says things of this sort all I can do is to acquiesce. I can't match his information in any way. In point of ornithology I only know two birds, the crow and the hen. I can tell them at once either by their plumage or by their song. I can carry on a nature conversation up to the limit of the crow and the hen; beyond that, not.

So for the first day or so in spring, I am able to say, "I saw a crow yesterday," or "I noticed a hen out walking this morning." But somehow my crow and hen seem to get out of date awfully quickly. I get ashamed of them and never refer to them again. But my friend keeps up his information for weeks, running through a whole gamut of animals. "I saw a gopher the other day," he says. "Guess what the little fellow was doing?" If only he knew it I'd like to break out and answer, "I don't care what the Hades the little fellow was doing." But, like everybody else, I suppose, I have not the assurance or the cruelty to break in upon the rapture of the Nature Man. Some day I shall: and when I do, let him watch out.

My particular anger with these Nature Men such as my friend, springs, I think, from the singularly irritating kind of language that they use: a sort of ingratiating wee-wee way in which they amalgamate themselves, as it were, with Nature. They really seem to feel so cute about it. If a wee hepaticá peeps above the snow they think they've done it. They describe it to you in a peculiar line of talk almost like baby language. "What do you think I saw?" says the Nature Man. "Just the tiniest little shoot of green peeping from the red-brown of the willow!" He imitates it with his thumb and finger to show the way the tiny little shoot shoots. I suppose he thinks he's a little bud himself. I really believe that my particular friend actually imagines himself in spring-time to be a wee hepatica, or a first crocus, or the yellow-underleaf of a daffodil.

And notice, too, the way in which they refer to colours; never plain and simple ones like red or black or blue; always stuff like

"red-brown" or "blue-green." My friend asks me if I have noticed the peculiar soft "yellow-brown" that the water fowl puts on in spring. Answer: No, I haven't: I haven't seen any water-fowl: I don't know where you look for them and I didn't know that they put anything on. As for "yellow-brown" I didn't know that there was any such colour. I have seen a blue-black crow this year, and I have noticed a burnt-indigo-sepia hen: but beyond that I have not seen anything doing.

Worst of all, and, in fact, verging on paresis is the state of mind of the Nature Man in regard to the birds. When he speaks of them his voice takes on a peculiar whine. My Nature friend told me yesterday that he had seen two orioles just beginning to build a nest behind his garage. He said he "tiptoed" to the spot (notice the peculiar wee-wee language that these people use)—and then stood rooted there watching them. I forget whether he said "rooted" or "riveted": on occasions like this he sometimes reports himself as one and sometimes as the other. But why on earth, if he is once fairly rooted, does he come unrooted again?

I therefore wish to give this plain and simple notice, meant without malice: If any other of my friends has noticed a snowdrop just peeping above the edge of the turf, will he mind not telling me. If any of them has noticed that the inner bark of the oak is beginning to blush a faint blue-red, would he mind keeping it to himself. If there is any man that I know who has seen two orioles starting to build a nest behind his garage, and if he has stood rooted to the ground with interest and watched the dear little feathered pair fluttering to and fro, would he object to staying rooted and saying nothing about it?

I am aware that I ought long ago to have spoken out openly to my Nature friends. But I have, I admit, the unfortunate and weak-minded disposition that forces me to smile with hatred in my heart. My unhappy neighbour does not suspect that I mean to kill him. But I do. I have stood for all that tanager and oriole stuff that I can. The end is coming. And as for that hepatica just putting its tiny face above the brown of the leaf—well, wait, that's all. Some day, I know it, I shall all of a sudden draw a revolver on my friend and say, "Listen. This has gone far enough. Every spring for many years you have stopped me in the street and told me of this Nature

stuff. And I have stood for it and smiled. You told me when the first touch of brown appeared on the underwing of the lark, and I let you say it. You kept me posted as to when the first trillium appeared from a pile of dead oak leaves under a brush-heap: and I let you tell it to me and never said that all I knew of trilliums was in connection with the German reparations indemnity. But the thing is exhausted. Meet your fate as you can. You are going where the first purple-pink of the young rhododendron will be of no interest to you."

I don't want to appear surly. But I am free to admit that I am the kind of man who would never notice an oriole building a nest unless it came and built it in my hat in the hat room of the club. There are other men like me too: and the time has come when we must protect ourselves. There are signs of spring that every sensible man respects and recognizes. He sees the oyster disappear from the club bill-of-fare, and knows that winter is passing; he watches boiled new California potatoes fall from 25 to 10 cents a portion and realizes that the season is advancing. He notes the first timid appearance of the asparagus just peeping out of its melted butter: and he sees the first soft blush on the edge of the Carolina Strawberry at one-dollar-and-fifty cents a box. And he watches, or he used to watch, in the old day beyond recall, for the sign BOCK BEER TO-DAY that told him that all nature was glad.

These are the signs of spring that any man can appreciate. They speak for themselves. Viewed thus, I am as sensitive to the first call for spring as any of my fellows. I like to sit in my club with my fellow members of like mind and watch its coming and herald its approach.

But for the kind of spring that needs a whole text book of biology to interpret it, I have neither use nor sympathy.





NONSENSE NOVELS AND  
MODEL MEMOIRS



## BUGGAM GRANGE

### *A Good Old Ghost Story*

THE evening was already falling as the vehicle in which I was contained entered upon the long and gloomy avenue that leads to Buggam Grange.

A resounding shriek echoed through the wood as I entered the avenue. I paid no attention to it at the moment, judging it to be merely one of those resounding shrieks which one might expect to hear in such a place at such a time. As my drive continued, however, I found myself wondering in spite of myself why such a shriek should have been uttered at the very moment of my approach.

I am not by temperament in any degree a nervous man, and yet there was much in my surroundings to justify a certain feeling of apprehension. The Grange is situated in the loneliest part of England, the marsh country of the fens to which civilization has still hardly penetrated. The inhabitants, of whom there are only one and a half to the square mile, live here and there among the fens and eke out a miserable existence by frog fishing and catching flies. They speak a dialect so broken as to be practically unintelligible, while the perpetual rain which falls upon them renders speech itself almost superfluous.

Here and there where the ground rises slightly above the level of the fens there are dense woods tangled with parasitic creepers and filled with owls. Bats fly from wood to wood. The air on the lower ground is charged with the poisonous gases which exude from the marsh, while in the woods it is heavy with the dank odours of deadly nightshade and poison ivy.

It had been raining in the afternoon, and as I drove up the avenue the mournful dripping of the rain from the dark trees accentuated the cheerlessness of the gloom. The vehicle in which I rode was a

fly on three wheels, the fourth having apparently been broken and taken off, causing the fly to sag on one side and drag on its axle over the muddy ground, the fly thus moving only at a foot's pace in a way calculated to enhance the dreariness of the occasion. The driver on the box in front of me was so thickly muffled up as to be indistinguishable, while the horse which drew us was so thickly coated with mist as to be practically invisible. Seldom, I may say, have I had a drive of so mournful a character.

The avenue presently opened out upon a lawn with overgrown shrubberies and in the half darkness I could see the outline of the Grange itself, a rambling, dilapidated building. A dim light struggled through the casement of a window in a tower room. Save for the melancholy cry of a row of owls sitting on the roof, and croaking of the frogs in the moat which ran around the grounds, the place was soundless. My driver halted his horse at the hither side of the moat. I tried in vain to urge him, by signs, to go further. I could see by the fellow's face that he was in a paroxysm of fear and indeed nothing but the extra sixpence which I had added to his fare would have made him undertake the drive up the avenue. I had no sooner alighted than he wheeled his cab about and made off.

Laughing heartily at the fellow's trepidation (I have a way of laughing heartily in the dark), I made my way to the door and pulled the bell-handle. I could hear the muffled reverberations of the bell far within the building. Then all was silent. I bent my ear to listen, but could hear nothing except perhaps the sound of a low moaning as of a person in pain or in great mental distress. Convinced, however, from what my friend Sir Jeremy Buggam had told me, that the Grange was not empty, I raised the ponderous knocker and beat with it loudly against the door.

But perhaps at this point I may do well to explain to my readers (before they are too frightened to listen to me) how I came to be beating on the door of Buggam Grange at nightfall on a gloomy November evening.

A year before I had been sitting with Sir Jeremy Buggam, the present baronet, on the verandah of his ranch in California.

"So you don't believe in the supernatural?" he was saying.

"Not in the slightest," I answered, lighting a cigar as I spoke.



When I want to speak very positively, I generally light a cigar as I speak.

"Well, at any rate, Digby," said Sir Jeremy, "Buggam Grange is haunted. If you want to be assured of it go down there any time and spend the night and you'll see for yourself."

"My dear fellow," I replied, "nothing will give me greater pleasure. I shall be back in England in six weeks, and I shall be delighted to put your ideas to the test. Now tell me," I added somewhat cynically, "is there any particular season or day when your Grange is supposed to be specially terrible?"

Sir Jeremy looked at me strangely. "Why do you ask that?" he said. "Have you heard the story of the Grange?"

"Never heard of the place in my life," I answered cheerily, "till you mentioned it to-night, my dear fellow, I hadn't the remotest idea that you still owned property in England."

"The Grange is shut up," said Sir Jeremy, "and has been for twenty years. But I keep a man there—Horrod—he was butler in my father's time and before. If you care to go, I'll write him that you're coming. And since you are taking your own fate in your hands, the fifteenth of November is the day."

At that moment Lady Buggam and Clara and the other girls came trooping out on the verandah, and the whole thing passed clean out of my mind. Nor did I think of it again until I was back in London. Then by one of those strange coincidences or premonitions—call it what you will—it suddenly occurred to me one morning that it was the fifteenth of November. Whether Sir Jeremy had written to Horrod or not, I did not know. But none the less night-fall found me, as I have described, knocking at the door of Buggam Grange.

The sound of the knocker had scarcely ceased to echo when I heard the shuffling of feet within, and the sound of chains and bolts being withdrawn. The door opened. A man stood before me holding a lighted candle which he shaded with his hand. His faded black clothes, once apparently a butler's dress, his white hair and advanced age left me in no doubt that he was Horrod of whom Sir Jeremy had spoken.

Without a word he motioned me to come in, and, still without speech, he helped me to remove my wet outer garments, and then

beckoned me into a great room, evidently the dining room of the Grange.

I am not in any degree a nervous man by temperament, as I think I remarked before, and yet there was something in the vastness of the wainscotted room, lighted only by a single candle, and in the silence of the empty house, and still more in the appearance of my speechless attendant which gave me a feeling of distinct uneasiness. As Horrod moved to and fro I took occasion to scrutinize his face more narrowly. I have seldom seen features more calculated to inspire a nervous dread. The pallor of his face and the whiteness of his hair (the man was at least seventy), and still more the peculiar furtiveness of his eyes, seemed to mark him as one who lived under a great terror. He moved with a noiseless step and at times he turned his head to glance in the dark corners of the room.

"Sir Jeremy told me," I said, speaking as loudly and as heartily as I could, "that he would apprise you of my coming."

I was looking into his face as I spoke.

In answer Horrod laid his finger across his lips and I knew that he was deaf and dumb. I am not nervous (I think I said that), but the realization that my sole companion in the empty house was a deaf mute struck a cold chill to my heart.

Horrod laid in front of me a cold meat pie, a cold goose, a cheese, and a tall flagon of cider. But my appetite was gone. I ate the goose, but found that after I had finished the pie I had but little zest for the cheese, which I finished without enjoyment. The cider had a sour taste, and after having permitted Horrod to refill the flagon twice, I found that it induced a sense of melancholy and decided to drink no more.

My meal finished, the butler picked up the candle and beckoned to me to follow him. We passed through the empty corridors of the house, a long line of pictured Buggams looking upon us as we passed, their portraits in the flickering light of the taper assuming a strange and life-like appearance as if leaning forward from their frames to gaze upon the intruder.

Horrod led me upstairs and I realized that he was taking me to the tower in the east wing in which I had observed a light.

The rooms to which the butler conducted me consisted of a sitting room with an adjoining bedroom, both of them fitted with

antique wainscotting against which a faded tapestry fluttered. There was a candle burning on the table in the sitting room but its insufficient light only rendered the surroundings the more dismal. Horrod bent down in front of the fireplace and endeavoured to light a fire there. But the wood was evidently damp, and the fire flickered feebly on the hearth.

The butler left me, and in the stillness of the house I could hear his shuffling step echo down the corridor. It may have been fancy, but it seemed to me that his departure was the signal for a low moan that came from somewhere behind the wainscot. There was a narrow cupboard door at one side of the room, and for the moment I wondered whether the moaning came from within. I am not as a rule lacking in courage (I am sure my reader will be decent enough to believe this), yet I found myself entirely unwilling to open the cupboard door and look within. In place of doing so I seated myself in a great chair in front of the feeble fire. I must have been seated there for some time when I happened to lift my eyes to the mantel above and saw, standing upon it, a letter addressed to myself. I knew the handwriting at once to be that of Sir Jeremy Buggam.

I opened it, and spreading it out within reach of the feeble candle light, I read as follows:

*"My dear Digby,*

In our talk that you will remember I had no time to finish telling you about the mystery of Buggam Grange. I take for granted, however, that you will go there and that Horrod will put you in the tower rooms, which are the only ones that make any pretense of being habitable. I have, therefore, sent him this letter to deliver at the Grange itself. The story is this:

On the night of the fifteenth of November, fifty years ago, my grandfather was murdered in the room in which you are sitting, by his cousin Sir Duggam Buggam. He was stabbed from behind while seated at the little table at which you are probably reading this letter. The two had been playing cards at the table and my grandfather's body was found lying in a litter of cards and gold sovereigns on the floor. Sir Duggam Buggam, insensible from drink, lay beside him, the fatal knife at his hand, his fingers smeared with blood. My grandfather, though of the younger branch, possessed a part of the estates which were to revert to Sir Duggam on his death. Sir Duggam

Buggam was tried at the Assizes and was hanged. On the day of his execution he was permitted by the authorities, out of respect for his rank, to wear a mask to the scaffold. The clothes in which he was executed are hanging at full length in the little cupboard to your right, and the mask is above them. It is said that on every fifteenth of November at midnight the cupboard door opens and Sir Duggam Buggam walks out into the room. It has been found impossible to get servants to remain at the Grange, and the place—except for the presence of Horrod—has been unoccupied for a generation. At the time of the murder Horrod was a young man of twenty-two, newly entered into the service of the family. It was he who entered the room and discovered the crime. On the day of the execution he was stricken with paralysis and has never spoken since. From that time to this he has never consented to leave the Grange where he lives in isolation.

Wishing you a pleasant night after your tiring journey,

I remain,

Very faithfully,

JEREMY BUGGAM."

I leave my reader to imagine my state of mind when I completed the perusal of the letter.

I have as little belief in the supernatural as any one, yet I must confess that there was something in the surroundings in which I now found myself which rendered me at least uncomfortable. My reader may smile if he will, but I assure him that it was with a very distinct feeling of uneasiness that I at length managed to rise to my feet, and, grasping my candle in my hand, to move backward into the bedroom. As I backed into it something so like a moan seemed to proceed from the closed cupboard that I accelerated my backward movement to a considerable degree. I hastily blew out the candle, threw myself upon the bed and drew the bed clothes over my head, keeping, however, one eye and one ear still out and available.

How long I lay thus listening to every sound, I cannot tell. The stillness had become absolute. From time to time I could dimly hear the distant cry of an owl and once far away in the building below a sound as of some one dragging a chain along a floor. More than once I was certain that I heard the sound of moaning behind the wainscot. Meantime I realized that the hour must now be drawing close upon the fatal moment of midnight. My watch I could not



see in the darkness, but by reckoning the time that must have elapsed I knew that midnight could not be far away. Then presently my ear, alert to every sound, could just distinguish far away across the fens the striking of a church bell, in the clock tower of Buggam village church, no doubt, tolling the hour of twelve.

On the last stroke of twelve, the cupboard door in the next room opened. There is no need to ask me how I knew it. I couldn't, of course, see it, but I could hear, or sense in some way, the sound of it. I could feel my hair, all of it, rising upon my head. I was aware that there was a *presence* in the adjoining room, I will not say a person, a living soul, but a *presence*. Any one who has been in the next room to a presence will know just how I felt. I could hear a sound as of some one groping on the floor and the faint rattle as of coins.

My hair was now perpendicular. My reader can blame it or not, but it was.

Then at this very moment from somewhere below in the building there came the sound of a prolonged and piercing cry, a cry as of a soul passing in agony. My reader may censure me or not, but right at this moment I decided to beat it. Whether I should have remained to see what was happening is a question that I will not discuss. My one idea was to get out and to get out quickly. The window of the tower room was some twenty-five feet above the ground. I sprang out through the casement in one leap and landed on the grass below. I jumped over the shrubbery in one bound and cleared the moat in one jump. I went down the avenue in about six strides and ran five miles along the road through the fens in three minutes. This at least is an accurate transcription of my sensations. It may have taken longer. I never stopped till I found myself on the threshold of the Buggam Arms in Little Buggam, beating on the door for the landlord.

I returned to Buggam Grange on the next day in the bright sunlight of a frosty November morning, in a seven cylinder motor car with six local constables and a physician. It makes all the difference. We carried revolvers, spades, pickaxes, shotguns and a ouija board.

What we found cleared up forever the mystery of the Grange. We discovered Horrod the butler lying on the dining room floor quite dead. The physician said that he had died from heart failure. There was evidence from the marks of his shoes in the dust that



he had come in the night to the tower room. On the table he had placed a paper which contained a full confession of his having murdered Jeremy Buggam fifty years before. The circumstances of the murder had rendered it easy for him to fasten the crime upon Sir Duggam, already insensible from drink. A few minutes with the ouija board enabled us to get a full corroboration from Sir Duggam. He promised moreover, now that his name was cleared, to go away from the premises forever.

My friend, the present Sir Jeremy, has rehabilitated Buggam Grange. The place is rebuilt. The moat is drained. The whole house is lit with electricity. There are beautiful motor drives in all directions in the woods. He has had the bats shot and the owls stuffed. His daughter, Clara Buggam, became my wife. She is looking over my shoulder as I write. What more do you want?

# GERTRUDE THE GOVERNESS OR SIMPLE SEVENTEEN

*Synopsis of Previous Chapters:  
There are no Previous Chapters*

IT was a wild and stormy night on the West Coast of Scotland. This, however, is immaterial to the present story, as the scene is not laid in the West of Scotland. For the matter of that the weather was just as bad on the East Coast of Ireland.

But the scene of this narrative is laid in the South of England and takes place in and around Knotacentinum Towers (pronounced as if written Nosham Taws), the seat of Lord Knotacent (pronounced as if written Nosh).

But it is not necessary to pronounce either of these names in reading them.

Nosham Taws was a typical English home. The main part of the house was an Elizabethan structure of warm red brick, while the elder portion, of which the Earl was inordinately proud, still showed the outlines of a Norman Keep, to which had been added a Lancastrian Jail and a Plantagenet Orphan Asylum. From the house in all directions stretched magnificent woodland and park with oaks and elms of immemorial antiquity, while nearer the house stood raspberry bushes and geranium plants which had been set out by the Crusaders.

About the grand old mansion the air was loud with the chirping of thrushes, the cawing of partridges and the clear sweet note of the rook, while deer, antelope and other quadrupeds strutted about the lawn so tame as to eat off the sun-dial. In fact, the place was a regular menagerie.

From the house downwards through the park stretched a beautiful broad avenue laid out by Henry VII.

Lord Nosh stood upon the hearthrug of the library. Trained diplomat and statesman as he was, his stern aristocratic face was upside down with fury.

"Boy," he said, "you shall marry this girl or I disinherit you. You are no son of mine."

Young Lord Ronald, erect before him, flung back a glance as defiant as his own.

"I defy you," he said. "Henceforth you are no father of mine. I will get another. I will marry none but a woman I can love. This girl that we have never seen—"

"Fool," said the Earl, "would you throw aside our estate and name of a thousand years? The girl, I am told, is beautiful; her aunt is willing; they are French; pah! they understand such things in France."

"But your reason—"

"I give no reason," said the Earl. "Listen, Ronald, I give one month. For that time you remain here. If at the end of it you refuse me, I cut you off with a shilling."

Lord Ronald said nothing; he flung himself from the room, flung himself upon his horse and rode madly off in all directions.

As the door of the library closed upon Ronald the Earl sank into a chair. His face changed. It was no longer that of the haughty nobleman, but of the hunted criminal. "He must marry the girl," he muttered. "Soon she will know all. Tutchemoff has escaped from Siberia. He knows and will tell. The whole of the mines pass to her, this property with it, and I—but enough." He rose, walked to the sideboard, drained a dipper full of gin and bitters, and became again a high-bred English gentleman.

It was at this moment that a high dogcart, driven by a groom in the livery of Earl Nosh, might have been seen entering the avenue of Nosham Taws. Beside him sat a young girl, scarce more than a child, in fact, not nearly so big as the groom.

The apple-pie hat which she wore, surmounted with black willow plumes, concealed from view a face so face-like in its appearance as to be positively facial.

It was—need we say it—Gertrude the Governess, who was this day to enter upon her duties at Nosham Taws.

At the same time that the dogcart entered the avenue at one end

there might have been seen riding down it from the other a tall young man, whose long, aristocratic face proclaimed his birth and who was mounted upon a horse with a face even longer than his own.

And who is this tall young man who draws nearer to Gertrude with every revolution of the horse? Ah, who, indeed? Ah, who, who? I wonder if any of my readers could guess that this was none other than Lord Ronald.

The two were destined to meet. Nearer and nearer they came. And then still nearer. Then for one brief moment they met. As they passed Gertrude raised her head and directed towards the young nobleman two eyes so eye-like in their expression as to be absolutely circular, while Lord Ronald directed towards the occupant of the dogcart a gaze so gazelike that nothing but a gazelle, or a gas-pipe, could have emulated its intensity.

Was this the dawn of love? Wait and see. Do not spoil the story.

Let us speak of Gertrude. Gertrude De Mongmorenci McFiggin had known neither father nor mother. They had both died years before she was born. Of her mother she knew nothing, save that she was French, was extremely beautiful, and that all her ancestors and even her business acquaintances had perished in the Revolution.

Yet Gertrude cherished the memory of her parents. On her breast the girl wore a locket in which was enshrined a miniature of her mother, while down her neck inside at the back hung a daguerreotype of her father. She carried a portrait of her grandmother up her sleeve and had pictures of her cousins tucked inside her boot, while beneath her—but enough, quite enough.

Of her father Gertrude knew even less. That he was a high-born English gentleman who had lived as a wanderer in many lands, this was all she knew. His only legacy to Gertrude had been a Russian grammar, a Roumanian phrase-book, a theodolite, and a work on mining engineering.

From her earliest infancy Gertrude had been brought up by her aunt. Her aunt had carefully instructed her in Christian principles. She had also taught her Mohammedanism to make sure.

When Gertrude was seventeen her aunt had died of hydrophobia.

The circumstances were mysterious. There had called upon her that day a strange bearded man in the costume of the Russians. After he had left, Gertrude had found her aunt in a syncope from which she passed into an apostrophe and never recovered.

To avoid scandal it was called hydrophobia. Gertrude was thus thrown upon the world. What to do? That was the problem that confronted her.

It was while musing one day upon her fate that Gertrude's eye was struck with an advertisement.

"Wanted a governess; must possess a knowledge of French, Italian, Russian, and Roumanian, Music, and Mining Engineering. Salary £1, 4 shillings and 4 pence halfpenny per annum. Apply between half-past eleven and twenty-five minutes to twelve at No. 41 A Decimal Six, Belgravia Terrace. The Countess of Nosh."

Gertrude was a girl of great natural quickness of apprehension, and she had not pondered over this announcement more than half an hour before she was struck with the extraordinary coincidence between the list of items desired and the things that she herself knew.

She duly presented herself at Belgravia Terrace before the Countess, who advanced to meet her with a charm which at once placed the girl at her ease.

"You are proficient in French?" she asked.

"Oh, *oui*," said Gertrude modestly.

"And Italian?" continued the Countess.

"Oh, *si*," said Gertrude.

"And German?" said the Countess in delight.

"Ah, *ja*," said Gertrude.

"And Russian?"

"*Yaw*."

"And Roumanian?"

"*Jep*."

Amazed at the girl's extraordinary proficiency in modern languages, the Countess looked at her narrowly. Where had she seen those lineaments before? She passed her hand over her brow in thought, and spit upon the floor, but no, the face baffled her.

"Enough," she said, "I engage you on the spot; to-morrow you go down to Nosham Taws and begin teaching the children. I must add



that in addition you will be expected to aid the Earl with his Russian correspondence. He has large mining interests at Tschminsk."

Tschminsk! why did the simple word reverberate upon Gertrude's ears? Why? Because it was the name written in her father's hand on the title page of his book on mining. What mystery was here?

It was on the following day that Gertrude had driven up the avenue.

She descended from the dogcart, passed through a phalanx of liveried servants drawn up seven-deep, to each of whom she gave a sovereign as she passed and entered Nosham Taws.

"Welcome," said the Countess, as she aided Gertrude to carry her trunk upstairs.

The girl presently descended and was ushered into the library, where she was presented to the Earl. As soon as the Earl's eye fell upon the face of the new governess he started visibly. Where had he seen those lineaments? Where was it? At the races, or the theatre—on a bus—no. Some subtler thread of memory was stirring in his mind. He strode hastily to the sideboard, drained a dipper and a half of brandy, and became again the perfect English gentleman.

While Gertrude has gone to the nursery to make the acquaintance of the two tiny golden-haired children who are to be her charges, let us say something here of the Earl and his son.

Lord Nosh was the perfect type of the English nobleman and statesman. The years that he had spent in the diplomatic service at Constantinople, St. Petersburg, and Salt Lake City had given to him a peculiar finesse and noblesse, while his long residence at St. Helena, Pitcairn Island, and Hamilton, Ontario, had rendered him impervious to external impressions. As deputy-paymaster of the militia of the country he had seen something of the sterner side of military life, while his hereditary office of Groom of the Sunday Breeches had brought him into direct contact with Royalty itself.

His passion for outdoor sports endeared him to his tenants. A keen sportsman, he excelled in fox-hunting, dog-hunting, pig-killing, bat-catching and the pastimes of his class.

In this latter respect Lord Ronald took after his father. From the start the lad had shown the greatest promise. At Eton he had made a splendid showing at battledore and shuttlecock, and at Cambridge had been first in his class at needlework. Already his name was

whispered in connection with the All England ping-pong championship, a triumph which would undoubtedly carry with it a seat in Parliament.

Thus was Gertrude the Governess installed at Nosham Taws.

The days and the weeks sped past.

The simple charm of the beautiful orphan girl attracted all hearts. Her two little pupils became her slaves. "Me loves oo," the little Rasehellfrida would say, leaning her golden head in Gertrude's lap. Even the servants loved her. The head gardener would bring a bouquet of beautiful roses to her room before she was up, the second gardener a bunch of early cauliflowers, the third a spray of late asparagus, and even the tenth and eleventh a sprig of mangel-wurzel or an armful of hay. Her room was full of gardeners all the time, while at evening the aged butler, touched at the friendless girl's loneliness, would tap softly at her door to bring her a rye whisky and seltzer or a box of Pittsburgh Stogies. Even the dumb creatures seemed to admire her in their own dumb way. The dumb rooks settled on her shoulder and every dumb dog around the place followed her.

And Ronald! ah, Ronald! Yes, indeed! They had met. They had spoken.

"What a dull morning," Gertrude had said. "*Quel triste matin! Was fur ein allerverdamnter Tag!*"

"Beastly," Ronald had answered.

"Beastly!!" The word rang in Gertrude's ears all day.

After that they were constantly together. They played tennis and ping-pong in the day, and in the evening, in accordance with the stiff routine of the place, they sat down with the Earl and Countess to twenty-five-cent poker, and later still they sat together on the verandah and watched the moon sweeping in great circles around the horizon.

It was not long before Gertrude realized that Lord Ronald felt towards her a warmer feeling than that of mere ping-pong. At times in her presence he would fall, especially after dinner, into a fit of profound subtraction.

Once at night, when Gertrude withdrew to her chamber and before seeking her pillow, prepared to retire as a preliminary to disrobing—in other words, before going to bed, she flung wide the

casement (opened the window) and perceived (saw) the face of Lord Ronald. He was sitting on a thorn bush beneath her, and his upturned face wore an expression of agonized pallor.

Meantime the days passed. Life at the Taws moved in the ordinary routine of a great English household. At 7 a gong sounded for rising, at 8 a horn blew for breakfast, at 8.30 a whistle sounded for prayers, at 1 a flag was run up at half-mast for lunch, at 4 a gun was fired for afternoon tea, at 9 a first bell sounded for dressing, at 9.15 a second bell for going on dressing, while at 9.30 a rocket was sent up to indicate that dinner was ready. At midnight dinner was over, and at 1 A.M. the tolling of a bell summoned the domestics to evening prayers.

Meanwhile the month allotted by the Earl to Lord Ronald was passing away. It was already July 15, then within a day or two it was July 17, and, almost immediately afterwards, July 18.

At times the Earl, in passing Ronald in the hall, would say sternly, "Remember, boy, your consent, or I disinherit you."

And what were the Earl's thoughts of Gertrude? Here was the one drop of bitterness in the girl's cup of happiness. For some reason that she could not divine the Earl showed signs of marked antipathy.

Once as she passed the door of the library he threw a bootjack at her. On another occasion at lunch alone with her he struck her savagely across the face with a sausage.

It was her duty to translate to the Earl his Russian correspondence. She sought in it in vain for the mystery. One day a Russian telegram was handed to the Earl. Gertrude translated it to him aloud.

"Tutchemoff went to the woman. She is dead."

On hearing this the Earl became livid with fury, in fact this was the day that he struck her with the sausage.

Then one day while the Earl was absent on a bat hunt, Gertrude, who was turning over his correspondence, with that sweet feminine instinct of interest that rose superior to ill-treatment, suddenly found the key to the mystery.

Lord Nosh was not the rightful owner of the Taws. His distant cousin of the older line, the true heir, had died in a Russian prison to which the machinations of the Earl, while Ambassador at

Tschminsk, had consigned him. The daughter of this cousin was the true owner of Nosham Taws.

The family story, save only that the documents before her withheld the name of the rightful heir, lay bare to Gertrude's eyes.

Strange is the heart of woman. Did Gertrude turn from the Earl with spurning? No. Her own sad fate had taught her sympathy.

Yet still the mystery remained! Why did the Earl start perceptibly each time that he looked into her face? Sometimes he started as much as four centimetres, so that one could distinctly see him do it. On such occasions he would hastily drain a dipper of rum and vichy water and become again the correct English gentleman.

The denouement came swiftly. Gertrude never forgot it.

It was the night of the great ball at Nosham Taws. The whole neighbourhood was invited. How Gertrude's heart had beat with anticipation, and with what trepidation she had overhauled her scant wardrobe in order to appear not unworthy in Lord Ronald's eyes. Her resources were poor indeed, yet the inborn genius for dress that she inherited from her French mother stood her in good stead. She twined a single rose in her hair and contrived herself a dress out of a few old newspapers and the inside of an umbrella that would have graced a court. Round her waist she bound a single braid of bag-string, while a piece of old lace that had been her mother's was suspended to her ear by a thread.

Gertrude was the cynosure of all eyes. Floating to the strains of the music she presented a picture of bright girlish innocence that no one could see undisentraptured.

The ball was at its height. It was away up!

Ronald stood with Gertrude in the shrubbery. They looked into one another's eyes.

"Gertrude," he said, "I love you."

Simple words, and yet they thrilled every fibre in the girl's costume.

"Ronald!" she said, and cast herself about his neck.

At this moment the Earl appeared standing beside them in the moonlight. His stern face was distorted with indignation.

"So!" he said, turning to Ronald, "it appears that you have chosen!"

"I have," said Ronald with hauteur.



"You prefer to marry this penniless girl rather than the heiress I have selected for you?"

Gertrude looked from father to son in amazement.

"Yes," said Ronald.

"Be it so," said the Earl, draining a dipper of gin which he carried, and resuming his calm. "Then I disinherit you. Leave this place, and never return to it."

"Come, Gertrude," said Ronald tenderly, "let us flee together."

Gertrude stood before them. The rose had fallen from her head. The lace had fallen from her ear and the bag-string had come undone from her waist. Her newspapers were crumpled beyond recognition. But dishevelled and illegible as she was, she was still mistress of herself.

"Never," she said firmly. "Ronald, you shall never make this sacrifice for me." Then to the Earl, in tones of ice, "There is a pride, sir, as great even as yours. The daughter of Metschnikoff McFiggin need crave a boon from no one."

With that she hauled from her bosom the daguerreotype of her father and pressed it to her lips.

The Earl started as if shot. "That name!" he cried, "that face! that photograph! stop!"

There! There is no need to finish; my readers have long since divined it. Gertrude was the heiress.

The lovers fell into one another's arms. The Earl's proud face relaxed. "God bless you," he said. The Countess and the guests came pouring out upon the lawn. The breaking day illuminated a scene of gay congratulations.

Gertrude and Ronald were wed. Their happiness was complete. Need we say more? Yes, only this. The Earl was killed in the hunting-field a few days later. The Countess was struck by lightning. The two children fell down a well. Thus the happiness of Gertrude and Ronald was complete.



# MY VICTORIAN GIRLHOOD

BY

LADY NEARLEIGH SLOPOVER

THE life we led at Gloops—Gloops was my father's seat—had all the charm and quiet and order which went with life in my young days. My dear Papa (he was the eleventh Baron Gloops) was most strict in his household. As a nobleman of the old school, he believed fully in the maxim *noblesse oblige*. He always insisted on the servants assembling for prayers at eight every morning. Indeed his first question to his own man when he brought up his brandy and soda at ten was whether the servants had been at prayers at eight.

My dear Mamma too always seemed to fulfil my idea of what a *grande dame* should be. She fully understood the routine of a great house like Gloops, and had a wonderful knowledge, not only of the kitchen, but of all sorts of draughts, simples and samples and the use of herbs. If any of the maids was ill, Mamma never called a doctor but herself mixed up a draught from roots that would have the girl on her feet in half an hour.

Nor did she disdain to do things herself, especially in an emergency. Once when Papa was taken faint in the drawing room, Mamma herself rang the bell for an egg, told the butler to hand her a glass and a decanter and herself broke the egg into the glass with her own hands. Papa revived at the sight of her presence of mind and himself reached for the brandy.

To myself and my younger sister, Lucy, Papa and Mamma were ideal parents. Never a day passed but Papa would either come up to our nursery himself, and chat with our governess, Mademoiselle Fromage—one of the De Bries—or would at least send up his own man to ask how we were. Even as quite little girls Papa could tell us apart without difficulty.

Mamma too was devoted to us, and would let us come down to her boudoir and see her all dressed to go out to a dinner, or let us come and speak to her when she was ready to drive in the phaeton; and once when Lucy was ill Mamma sent her own maid to sleep in Lucy's room, in spite of the infection.

Gloops was on the border of Lincolnshire. All of Papa's tenants and cottagers spoke with the beautiful old broad accent of the fen country and said "Yowp" for "yes," and "Nowp" for "no," and "Thowp" for "thou," and "sowp" for "soup." It seems so musical. It is a pity it is dying out.

Papa was a model landlord. The tenantry were never evicted unless they failed to pay their rent, and when the cottages fell down Papa had them propped up again. Once a year Papa gave a great ball for the tenantry on his estate, and our friends used to drive long distances to be there, and the great hall was cleared for dancing, for the gentry, and the tenantry danced in the great barn. Papa gave each of them a bun and an orange and a prayer book for each child. The working class was happier, I think, in those days.

Papa was not only democratic in that way with his tenantry but also with the people of the neighbourhood and of the village, though none of them were gentlemen. Quite often he would bring Dr. McGregor, the doctor of the village, to dine at Gloops, I mean if no one else was there. Dr. McGregor had taken a very high degree at Edinburgh, but was not a gentleman. He had travelled a great deal and had been decorated by the King of France for some wonderful medical work for the French armies in Algeria, so it was a pity that he wasn't a gentleman: especially as you couldn't tell that he wasn't if no one said so.

Isolated as Gloops was, many great people drove down from London to see us, on account of Papa's position in the Lords. Indeed the most wonderful thing about our life as children at Gloops was the visit every now and then of one of these great and distinguished people whose names are now history. How well one remembers them—such old world manners and courtesy! I recall how Lucy and I were brought into the drawing room to shake hands with dear old Lord Melrush, the prime minister—always so pleasant and jolly. I remember Mamma said, "These are my two little girls"—and Lord Melrush laughed and said, "Well, thank God they don't look like

their father, eh?" Which was really quite clever of him, because we didn't. And I remember old Field Marshal Lord Stickett, perhaps England's greatest strategist—they called him Wellington's right hand man—he'd lost his left arm. I can still see him standing on the hearth rug saying, "Your two little girls, ma'am: well, I don't think much of them!" He was always like that, concise and abrupt.

I liked much better Admiral Rainbow, who had been one of Nelson's captains and had a black patch over his eye where some one hit him in the face at Trafalgar. I was quite a growing girl when he came, fourteen at least, and he said, "By Gad! Madam, shiver my spankers, but here's a gal for you! Look at the stern run under her counter!"

Another great thing in the life at Gloops was when I got old enough to dine with Mamma and Papa and their guests. Such dinners were a wonderful education. I was taken into dinner once by Lord Glower the great archaeologist. He hardly spoke. I asked him if he thought the Pyramids were built by the Hittites. He said he didn't know.

We used to dine in the old wainscotted dining hall—it was a marvellous room, dating from Richard III with the panels all worm-eaten almost to pieces. Papa was offered huge sums for them. It had some grand old paintings—one a Vandyke, so blackened you couldn't possibly tell what it was especially as most of the paint had fallen off: Papa later on presented it to the Nation—the year the prime minister voted him the Garter—refusing any pay for it, though the Prime Minister made him accept a thousand guineas as a *solatium*. Papa fetched down another Vandyke from the storeroom.

By the time I was eighteen I think I may claim to have grown to be a very handsome girl and certainly, as everybody said, very aristocratic looking. I was several times compared with the Princess Eulalie of Anheuser and once with the Grand Duchess Marianna Maria of Swig-Pilsener. Dear old Dr. Glowworm, our Vicar, who was so old that he remembered the French Revolution, said that if I had lived then I would certainly have been guillotined, or at least shut up.

But presently there came into my life—a little earlier than that, I was eighteen—the greatest event of all, when I first met Alfred my dear husband that was to be. It was at a great dinner party that Papa gave at Gloops, given for Sir John Overdraft, the head of the

new bank that had just made Papa a director. Sir John was the head of the bank and had been knighted, but the strange thing was that he was really nobody. I mean he had made a great fortune in the City and had huge influence in finance, but he wasn't anybody. And, what was more, everybody knew that he was nobody. Papa made no secret of it. I remember hearing old Lord Tweedlepip, our neighbour, in the drawing room before dinner ask Papa who Sir John was and Papa said, "As far as I know he isn't anybody." But in meeting with him Papa was all courtesy itself; indeed he often explained to us children that even though prominent people—writers, painters, sculptors, for instance—were often nobody, we should treat them in society as if they were like ourselves.

It was such a large party that I can hardly remember all the people, especially as it was my first real dinner party. I was out, but hadn't yet been presented. But there was one man there I especially noticed, although he was not only nobody but was an American. He was the first I think I ever saw, though now of course you meet them anywhere, and many of them such cultivated people that you can hardly tell them. But this man, the first American I saw, seemed different from the men around him, more hard and dangerous, and yet pleasant enough, but no manners. I couldn't even be sure of his name because Papa and Sir John, who both seemed to know him well, kept calling him different things like "Old Forty-four Calibre," and "Old Ten-Spot." His family seat was called Colorado and I gathered that he owned gold mines. I gathered all this because I happened to be near the library door a little before dinner, when Papa and Sir John and Mr. Derringer—that perhaps was his real name—were all talking together. Mr. Derringer wanted to give Papa an enormous part of a gold mine and then Papa was to pass it on to Sir John and the new bank was to pass it over to the public. It all seemed very generous. I heard Mr. Derringer say to Papa, laughing, "Gloops, if we had you in the States you would be sent to Sing-Sing in six months." Sing-Sing it seems was a new place they had just started in America. It corresponds, Mamma said, to our House of Commons. Mr. Derringer laughed when he said that Papa could get in, but I am sure he meant it.

But I am leaving out, in a feminine way, I fear, the great thing of the evening which was that it was dear Alfred, my later husband,



who took me in to dinner. So wonderful he looked, over six feet high and as straight as a piece of wood, with beautiful brown hair and those handsome high side whiskers—the French call them *cotelette de mouton*—which were worn then. I had never seen him before and all that I knew of him was that his name was the Hon. Alfred Cyril Nancie Slopover, eldest son of the tenth Marquis of Slopover and Bath and that his people were west county people, but very old and very good. His mother was a Dudd, which made her a first cousin of Lord Havengotteny.

Alfred, I say, took me in. We hardly spoke at dinner because I think I was shy, and at any rate, at our end of the table Mr. Derringer was telling Mamma wonderful stories about hunting the wild papooses in Colorado, which must be fascinating, and how the Cactus Indians pursue the buffalo with affidavits, and we were all listening. But Alfred, though he never talked much, had that firm incisive way of saying things, just in a word, that sounds so final. For instance, after dinner, when the men came into the drawing room for tea, I said to Alfred, "Shall we go into the conservatory?" And he said, "Let's." And I said, "Shall we sit among the begonias?" and he said, "Rather!" and after a time I said, "Shall we go back to the drawing room?", and he said, "Ah!" When we got back to the drawing room, Mr. Derringer was still telling Mamma of his wonderful adventures—indeed they were all listening.

It made me realize what a vast country America is. In fact I have always felt, and still feel, that some day it will have a great future. But that evening I could hardly listen to Mr. Derringer because my heart was beating so with happiness, as I felt certain that Alfred had fallen in love with me. He looked so noble, sitting there listening to Mr. Derringer, with his mouth half open, seeming to drink it all in. Now and again he would make such intelligent comments as when Mr. Derringer told about the social life in the West, and the lynching parties, and of how they invite even the negroes to them, and Alfred said, "Do they really!" He seemed that evening, in fact he always has seemed, so typically British, so willing to be informed.

Everybody was so loud in praise of Alfred next day. Tiptoeing round the house, because I did not think it dishonourable, I was able to hear such a lot of complimentary things about him. Mr. Der-



ringer, who used a lot of those fascinating American expressions taken from their machinery, called him a "complete nut," and Lord John, who is so brusque and quick himself that he admires Alfred's dreamy, poetical nature, said he seemed "only half there." But think of my delight when a day or two later Alfred sent Mamma a beautiful bouquet of roses from Slops, his father's seat, and then a basket of hothouse grapes and then, for Papa, a large fish, a salmon. Two weeks after that, he wrote and definitely proposed to Papa, and Papa went up to London and saw the solicitors and accepted Alfred. It all seemed so romantic and wonderful, and then Alfred came over for a blissful week at Gloops as my betrothed, which meant that we could walk in the grounds together by ourselves, and that even in the drawing room Mamma would sit at the other end of the room and pretend not to see us.

Of course Love always has its ups and downs and never runs smooth: I remember that there was a dreadful quarrel with my sister Lucy who said that Alfred was ignorant and didn't *know* anything: and I said why should he? What did a man like Alfred need to know? It seemed so silly. I remember I often thought of it later on when Lucy made her own unhappy marriage.

Then for a little while there was a little trouble about my dowry, or jointure. Papa at first offered five thousand pounds and Alfred refused it flat. He said he ought to have at least ten thousand. It seemed so romantic to be quarrelled over like that, as a sort of gauge of battle. Alfred was so firm: even when Papa raised from pounds to guineas he held out. So at last Papa gave way completely, and not only gave way, but went generously further and gave Alfred twelve thousand pounds, all to be paid in shares in Mr. Derringer's gold mine. Papa explained that they were called "preferred" shares, which made them very desirable. He said that if Alfred and I kept them long enough there was no telling what they would be worth. So Alfred was delighted at his victory over Papa, especially as Sir John always said that Papa could have been a financier and Mr. Derringer had said he could have got into Sing-Sing.

I remember that Papa, in the same generous fit, gave away a lot of the same gold shares, practically all he had, to various people, to Alfred's father, Lord Slopover, to old Lord Tweedlepip, our

neighbour and others, for next to nothing, or at least nothing like their real value.

Then came the happy day when Alfred and I were married in the little church at Gloops, by old Dr. Glowworm. Everybody was there, and all the tenantry and cottagers in a long line outside the church, for Alfred and me to walk through; and Papa gave a grand fête for the tenantry on the lawn with beer to drink our health in and an orange and bun for each of the children, and a work-box for each grown-up girl, a work-basket each for the old women, and for each young boy a book called *Work*. I think the working people were far happier then than now. They often strike me now as restless. I think they need more work.

After our marriage we went to live in London because the Prime Minister wanted Alfred to go into the House, as he said that England needed men like Alfred. Alfred accepted the seat but on the firm condition that he needn't speak, or work, or attend or have anything to do with the voters. The Prime Minister said yes at once: he didn't want Alfred to see the voters at all.

Naturally, of course, our earlier married life had its ups and downs as it does with all people. When we first went to London we were quite poor, I mean not at all well off, and it was difficult for us to afford enough servants to manage our house properly: on the other hand, without a house that size it would have been hard to use all our servants. Even as it was Alfred would himself often fetch up his own shaving water, and more than once I have seen him light his own fire, touch the match to it himself, sooner than ring up a servant. But we both agreed that these little discomforts only make life all the more worthy.

But after a little while Papa's influence got for Alfred a court appointment as Gentleman Equerry of the Bloodhounds, which made our position much easier. Alfred, of course, didn't have to take the bloodhounds out himself, as that was done by the Yeoman Equerry: but he had to countersign all the warrants for what they ate, which often kept him busy.

Then on top of little hardships at home came the terrible trouble of my poor sister Lucy's marriage. Lucy had always, I think, been a little wanting in making proper social distinctions. I remember that even as a girl she would often speak with cottagers in what seemed

quite a wrong way, as if she were their equal. So in a way it was not surprising when she married absolutely beneath her. Papa and Mamma were utterly consternated when they heard of it and Mamma decided to do the only brave thing about it and not speak to Lucy any more. She had married a man who not only had no family—I mean in the literal sense absolutely none—but who worked as a journalist on a newspaper. I know that of course nowadays things are different and a journalist can be received anywhere, I mean if he is properly born. But it was not so then and Lucy's husband, whose name was Mr. Smith, was even worse than that as he had tried to write books as well: indeed he had one published, a book about flowers and botany. The whole thing was of course a great pity to us—I mean, Lucy's living like that—until at last Papa, who naturally had great influence, got the Colonial Office to pay Mr. Smith's expenses, with Lucy and the children—there were three already—to go out to British Borneo to study flowers: as he couldn't afford to get back, they all stayed there and it was all right. Papa had a letter later from one of the boys from Sarawak and Papa said he seemed promising and might grow up to be a Dacoit.

But much more serious were the financial troubles which once or twice threatened to overwhelm us. The first was when Papa's bank broke and Sir John and the directors went to jail, because in those days the law was very strict and fair and the bank directors went to jail like anybody else—except of course Papa. In his case, as the Lord Chief Justice explained, it had to be understood that he acted in utter ignorance, in fact that he knew nothing, being a nobleman. Indeed Lord Argue, after sentencing the directors, complimented Papa very highly: he said it was men like Papa who make embezzlement possible—which we all thought very handsome. But after all it was a great relief when it was over, especially as it turned out that by a lucky chance Papa had sold all his own shares in the bank the very day before it broke.

But to us, to Alfred and me, a much more direct blow was the failure of Mr. Derringer's gold mine. We never knew just what had happened. It seemed that the mine had not exactly failed but it had never been there. Alfred heard in the City that Mr. Derringer had "salted" the mine but Alfred couldn't see how he could do that, as it would take such a lot. At any rate it was all in the American

papers and poor Mr. Derringer's trial and he was sent to prison for ten years and was there for weeks and weeks before he could get out. Papa's name came into it all, of course, as a first director but he was out of it since, though there might have been a sort of scandal except that the American judge spoke very handsomely of Papa's ignorance of it all. Indeed he said that what Papa didn't know would fill a book, and that it was men like Papa who gave England the name it had.

So it all blew over, but presently Alfred and I found that after that the dividends from the mine stopped, which we couldn't understand as they were preferred. Alfred would have been very cool with Papa over it, but as Papa was getting old it seemed wrong to get cool with him. If anything happened to Papa while Alfred was cool, it might make a difference. Indeed it was just at that time that dear Papa got a stroke, his first stroke. It didn't really incapacitate him at first but we thought best to call in a consultant opinion, and then he got a second stroke, and so, in real alarm, we sent for a great Harley Street specialist and Papa got a third stroke. With the third stroke, he passed out.

I will not carry these Memoirs down any further than the day of Papa's funeral, which seems a good place to stop. Such a wonderful day, one of those bright, crisp autumn days when it just feels good to be alive! Gloops looked so wonderful in the bright sunlight and everywhere the late autumn flowers. And such wonderful messages of sympathy! One from the House of Lords, official, to say that the House had learned with satisfaction that Lord Gloops was to be buried; and one from the Home Secretary expressing his personal appreciation of Papa's burial: and one from the Secretary in Waiting at Windsor Castle that the whole court was ordered to go into half mourning for a quarter of an hour. And then the funeral service in our dear little church at Gloops. Old Dr. Glowworm, though he must have been nearly a hundred at the time, preached the funeral sermon. It was just a little hard to hear him, except the text which was "Where has he gone?"—we all thought it so beautifully apt—but we couldn't quite follow Dr. Glowworm's answer. Then as the crowning thing in the day came the reading of Papa's will, by Papa's own solicitor, Mr. Rust, who came from London to



Gloops on purpose. Of course we knew that everything would be all right but, of course, couldn't help feeling a little nervous. Poor Papa had always been a little uncertain and when we remembered about Papa's bank and the mine, we couldn't feel quite sure what would happen to Gloops. The title, of course, would go to my cousin, the present Marquis of Gloops, but the entail had been cut long ago and Papa was free to do as he liked. I remember how dear Alfred sat so bolt upright, trying so hard to understand every word, though of course that was impossible as most of the will was in law terms. But the meaning came out clear enough. Dear Papa had done everything just as it should be according to the fine old traditions of the time. Mamma was given the Dower House for life, with the full right to use her own money in maintaining it. All the old servants were remembered—Papa gave them each a suit of mourning and quite a substantial sum; I forget what, but I think at least ten pounds, which meant a great deal to people in their class. For my sister Lucy, Papa could not, of course, in view of what had happened, do very much: but even in her case he left her something to remember him by, a beautiful set of books from his library—sermons bound in old leather—and a purse for each of her children—there were only five at that time—with half a sovereign in it, and a prayer book each. Alfred and I got Gloops and all the residuum—that was the word Mr. Rust used—residuum of the estate, which was only fair as we should need it to keep the estate up: on the other hand we could hardly have used the residuum if we hadn't had the estate itself. Mr. Rust explained it all very clearly.

After it was all over Alfred said, "Well, it's all over."



# GUIDO THE GIMLET OF GHENT

## *A Romance of Chivalry*

**I**T was in the flood-tide of chivalry. Knighthood was in the pod.

The sun was slowly setting in the east, rising and falling occasionally as it subsided, and illuminating with its dying beams the towers of the grim castle of Buggensberg.

Isolde the Slender stood upon an embattled turret of the castle. Her arms were outstretched to the empty air, and her face, upturned as if in colloquy with heaven, was distraught with yearning.

Anon she murmured, "Guido"—and bewhiles a deep sigh rent her breast.

Sylph-like and ethereal in her beauty, she scarcely seemed to breathe.

In fact she hardly did.

Willowy and slender in form, she was as graceful as a meridian of longitude. Her body seemed almost too frail for motion, while her features were of a mould so delicate as to preclude all thought of intellectual operation.

She was begirt with a flowing kirtle of deep blue, bebound with a belt be buckled with a silvern clasp, while about her waist a stomacher of point lace ended in the ruffled farthingale at her throat. On her head she bore a sugar-loaf hat shaped like an extinguisher and pointing backward at an angle of 45 degrees.

"Guido," she murmured, "Guido."

And erstwhile she would wring her hands as one distraught and mutter, "He cometh not."

The sun sank and night fell, enwrapping in shadow the frowning castle of Buggensberg, and the ancient city of Ghent at its foot. And as the darkness gathered, the windows of the castle shone out with fiery red, for it was Yuletide, and it was wassail all in the Great

Hall of the castle, and this night the Margrave of Buggensberg made him a feast, and celebrated the betrothal of Isolde, his daughter, with Tancred the Tenspot.

And to the feast he had bidden all his liege lords and vassals—Hubert the Husky, Edward the Earwig, Rollo the Rumbottle, and many others.

In the meantime the Lady Isolde stood upon the battlements and mourned for the absent Guido.

The love of Guido and Isolde was of that pure and almost divine type, found only in the middle ages.

They had never seen one another. Guido had never seen Isolde, Isolde had never seen Guido. They had never heard one another speak. They had never been together. They did not know one another.

Yet they loved.

Their love had sprung into being suddenly and romantically, with all the mystic charm which is love's greatest happiness.

Years before, Guido had seen the name of Isolde the Slender painted on a fence.

He had turned pale, fallen into a swoon and started at once for Jerusalem.

On the very same day Isolde in passing through the streets of Ghent had seen the coat of arms of Guido hanging on a clothes line.

She had fallen back into the arms of her tirewomen more dead than alive.

Since that day they had loved.

Isolde would wander forth from the castle at earliest morn, with the name of Guido on her lips. She told his name to the trees. She whispered it to the flowers. She breathed it to the birds. Quite a lot of them knew it. At times she would ride her palfrey along the sands of the sea and call "Guido" to the waves! At other times she would tell it to the grass or even to a stick of cordwood or a ton of coal.

Guido and Isolde, though they had never met, cherished each the features of the other. Beneath his coat of mail Guido carried a miniature of Isolde, carved on ivory. He had found it at the bottom of the castle crag, between the castle and the old town of Ghent at its foot.

How did he know that it was Isolde?

There was no need for him to ask.

His *heart* had spoken.

The eye of love cannot be deceived.

And Isolde? She, too, cherished beneath her stomacher a miniature of Guido the Gimlet. She had it of a travelling chapman in whose pack she had discovered it, and had paid its price in pearls. How had she known that he it was, that is, that it was he? Because of the Coat of Arms emblazoned beneath the miniature. The same heraldic design that had first shaken her to the heart. Sleeping or waking it was ever before her eyes: A lion, proper, quartered in a field of gules, and a dog, improper, three-quarters in a field of buckwheat.

And if the love of Isolde burned thus purely for Guido, the love of Guido burned for Isolde with a flame no less pure.

No sooner had love entered Guido's heart than he had determined to do some great feat of emprise or adventure, some high achievement of derring-do which should make him worthy to woo her.

He placed himself under a vow that he would eat nothing, save only food, and drink nothing, save only liquor, till such season as he should have performed his feat.

For this cause he had at once set out for Jerusalem to kill a Saracen for her. He killed one, quite a large one. Still under his vow, he set out again at once to the very confines of Pannonia determined to kill a Turk for her. From Pannonia he passed into the Highlands of Britain, where he killed her a Caledonian.

Every year and every month Guido performed for Isolde some new achievement of emprise.

And in the meantime Isolde waited.

It was not that suitors were lacking. Isolde the Slender had suitors in plenty ready to do her lightest hest.

Feats of arms were done daily for her sake. To win her love suitors were willing to vow themselves to perdition. For Isolde's sake, Otto the Otter had cast himself into the sea. Conrad the Cocoanut had hurled himself from the highest battlement of the castle head first into the mud. Hugo the Hopeless had hanged himself by the waistband to a hickory tree and had refused all efforts to dislodge him.

For her sake Siegfried the Susceptible had swallowed sulphuric acid.

But Isolde the Slender was heedless of the court thus paid to her.

In vain her stepmother, Agatha the Angular, urged her to marry. In vain her father, the Margrave of Buggensberg, commanded her to choose the one or the other of the suitors.

Her heart remained unswervingly true to the Gimlet.

From time to time love tokens passed between the lovers. From Jerusalem Guido had sent to her a stick with a notch in it to signify his undying constancy. From Pannonia he sent a piece of board, and from Venetia about two feet of scantling. All these Isolde treasured. At night they lay beneath her pillow.

Then, after years of wandering, Guido had determined to crown his love with a final achievement for Isolde's sake.

It was his design to return to Ghent, to scale by night the castle cliff and to prove his love for Isolde by killing her father for her, casting her stepmother from the battlements, burning the castle, and carrying her away.

This design he was now hastening to put into execution. Attended by fifty trusty followers under the lead of Carlo the Corkscrew and Beowulf the Bradawl, he had made his way to Ghent. Under cover of night they had reached the foot of the castle cliff; and now, on their hands and knees in single file, they were crawling round and round the spiral path that led up to the gate of the fortress. At six of the clock they had spiralled once. At seven of the clock they had reappeared at the second round, and as the feast in the hall reached its height, they reappeared on the fourth lap.

Guido the Gimlet was in the lead. His coat of mail was hidden beneath a parti-coloured cloak and he bore in his hand a horn.

By arrangement he was to penetrate into the castle by the postern gate in disguise, steal from the Margrave by artifice the key of the great door, and then by a blast of his horn summon his followers to the assault. Alas! there was no need for haste, for at this very Yuletide, on this very night, the Margrave, wearied of Isolde's resistance, had determined to bestow her hand upon Tancred the Tenspot.

It was wassail all in the great hall. The huge Margrave, seated at the head of the board, drained flagon after flagon of wine, and pledged deep the health of Tancred the Tenspot, who sat plumed



and armoured beside him.

Great was the merriment of the Margrave, for beside him, crouched upon the floor, was a new jester, whom the seneschal had just admitted by the postern gate, and the novelty of whose jests made the huge sides of the Margrave shake and shake again.

"Odds Bodikins!" he roared, "but the tale is as rare as it is new! and so the wagoner said to the Pilgrim that sith he had asked him to put him off the wagon at that town, put him off he must, albeit it was but the small of the night—by St. Pancras! whence hath the fellow so novel a tale?—nay, tell it me but once more, haply I may remember it"—and the Baron fell back in a perfect paroxysm of merriment.

As he fell back, Guido—for the disguised jester was none other than he, that is, than him—sprang forward and seized from the girdle of the Margrave the key of the great door that dangled at his waist.

Then, casting aside the jester's cloak and cap, he rose to his full height, standing in his coat of mail.

In one hand he brandished the double-headed mace of the Crusader, and in the other a horn.

The guests sprang to their feet, their hands upon their daggers.

"Guido the Gimlet!" they cried.

"Hold," said Guido, "I have you in my power!!"

Then placing the horn to his lips and drawing a deep breath, he blew with his utmost force.

And then again he blew—blew like anything.

Not a sound came.

The horn wouldn't blow.

"Seize him!" cried the Baron.

"Stop," said Guido, "I claim the laws of chivalry. I am here to seek the Lady Isolde, betrothed by you to Tancred. Let me fight Tancred in single combat, man to man."

A shout of approbation gave consent.

The combat that followed was terrific.

First Guido, raising his mace high in the air with both hands, brought it down with terrible force on Tancred's mailed head. Then Guido stood still, and Tancred raising his mace in the air brought it down upon Guido's head. Then Tancred stood still and turned



his back, and Guido, swinging his mace sideways, gave him a terrific blow from behind, midway, right centre. Tancred returned the blow. Then Tancred knelt down on his hands and knees and Guido brought the mace down on his back. It was a sheer contest of skill and agility. For a time the issue was doubtful. Then Tancred's armour began to bend, his blows weakened, he fell prone. Guido pressed his advantage and hammered him out as flat as a sardine can. Then placing his foot on Tancred's chest, he lowered his vizor and looked around about him.

At this second there was a resounding shriek.

Isolde the Slender, alarmed by the sound of the blows, precipitated herself into the room.

For a moment the lovers looked into each other's faces.

Then with their countenances distraught with agony they fell swooning in different directions.

There had been a mistake!

Guido was not Guido, and Isolde was not Isolde. They were wrong about the miniatures. Each of them was a picture of somebody else.

Torrents of remorse flooded over the lovers' hearts.

Isolde thought of the unhappy Tancred, hammered out as flat as a picture-card and hopelessly spoilt; of Conrad the Cocoanut head first in the mud, and Sickfried the Susceptible coiled up with agonies of sulphuric acid.

Guido thought of the dead Saracens and the slaughtered Turks. And all for nothing!

The guerdon of their love had proved vain. Each of them was not what the other had thought. So it is ever with the loves of this world, and herein is the mediaeval allegory of this tale.

The hearts of the two lovers broke together.

They expired.

Meantime Carlo the Corkscrew and Beowulf the Bradawl, and their forty followers, were hustling down the spirals as fast as they could crawl, hind end uppermost.



## DETECTIVE STORIES



# THE GREAT DETECTIVE

## I

*"'Ha!' exclaimed the Great Detective, raising himself from the resilient sod on which he had lain prone for half an hour, 'what have we here?'*

*"As he spoke, he held up a blade of grass he had plucked.*

*"'I see nothing,' said the Poor Nut.*

*"'No, I suppose not,' said the Great Detective; after which he seated himself on a stone, took out his saxophone from its case, and for the next half hour was lost in the intricacies of Gounod's 'Sonata in Six Flats with a Basement.'"*

*—Any Detective Story*

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The publishers tell us that more than a thousand detective stories are sold every day—or is it every hour? It does not matter. The point is that a great many are sold all the time, and that there is no slackening of the appetite of the reading public for stories of mysterious crime.

It is not so much the crime itself that attracts as the unravelling of the mystery by the super-brain of the Great Detective, as silent as he is efficient. He speaks only about once a week. He seldom eats. He crawls around in the grass picking up clues. He sits upside down in his armchair forging his inexorable chain of logic.

But when he's done with it, the insoluble mystery is solved, justice is done, the stolen jewels are restored, and the criminal is either hanged or pledges his word to go and settle on a ranch in Saskatchewan; after which the Great Detective takes a night off at the Grand Opera, the only thing that really reaches him.

The tempting point about a detective story—both for the writer and the reader—is that it is so beautifully easy to begin. All that is needed is to start off with a first-class murder.

*"Mr. Blankety Blank sat in his office in the drowsy hour of a Sat-*



*urday afternoon. He was alone. Work was done for the day. The clerks were gone. The building, save for the janitor, who lived in the basement, was empty.*

*"As he sat thus, gazing in a sort of reverie at the papers on the desk in front of him, his chin resting on his hand, his eyes closed and slumber stole upon him."*

Quite so. Let him feel just as drowsy as ever he likes. The experienced reader knows that now is the very moment when he is about to get a crack on the nut. This drowsy gentleman, on the first page of a detective story, is not really one of the characters at all. He is cast for the melancholy part that will presently be called The Body. Some writers prefer to begin with The Body itself right away—after this fashion:

*"The Body was that of an elderly gentleman, upside down, but otherwise entirely dressed."*

But it seems fairer to give the elderly gentleman a few minutes of life before knocking him on the head. As long as the reader knows that there is either a Body right away, or that there is going to be one, he is satisfied.

Sometimes a touch of terror is added by having the elderly gentleman killed in a country house at night. Most readers will agree that this is the better way to kill him.

*"Sir Charles Althorpe sat alone in his library at Althorpe Chase. It was late at night. The fire had burned low in the grate. Through the heavily curtained windows no sound came from outside. Save for the maids, who slept in a distant wing, and save for the butler, whose room was under the stairs, the Chase, at this time of the year, was empty. As Sir Charles sat thus in his arm-chair, his head gradually sank upon his chest and he dozed off into slumber."*

Foolish man! Doesn't he know that to doze off into slumber in an isolated country house, with the maids in a distant wing, is little short of madness? Apparently he doesn't, and his fate, to the com-

plete satisfaction of the reader, comes right at him.

Let it be noted that in thus setting the stage for a detective story, the Body selected is, in nine cases out of ten, that of an "elderly gentleman." It would be cowardly to kill a woman, and even our grimmest writers hesitate to kill a child. But an "elderly gentleman" is all right, especially when "fully dressed" and half asleep. Somehow they seem to invite a knock on the head.

After such a beginning, the story ripples brightly along with the finding of the Body, and with the Inquest, and with the arrest of the janitor, or the butler, and the usual details of that sort.

Any trained reader knows when he sees that trick phrase, "*save for the janitor, who lived in the basement,*" or "*save for the butler, whose room was under the stairs,*" that the janitor and the butler are to be arrested at once.

Not that they really did commit the murder. We don't believe they did. But they are suspected. And a good writer in the outset of a crime story throws suspicion around like pepper.

In fact, the janitor and the butler are not the only ones. There is also, in all the stories, a sort of Half Hero (he can't be a whole hero, because that would interfere with the Great Detective), who is partly suspected, and sometimes even arrested. He is the young man who is either heir to the money in the story, or who had a "violent quarrel" with the Body, or who was seen "leaving the premises at a late hour" and refuses to say why.

Some writers are even mean enough to throw a little suspicion on the Heroine—the niece or ward of the elderly gentleman—a needless young woman dragged in by convention into this kind of novel. She gets suspected merely because she bought half a gallon of arsenic at the local chemist shop. They won't believe her when she says, with tears in her eyes, that she wanted it to water the tulips with.

The Body being thus completely dead, Inspector Higginbottom of the local police having been called in, having questioned all the maids, and having announced himself "completely baffled," the crime story is well set and the Great Detective is brought into it.

Here, at once, the writer is confronted with the problem of how to tell the story, and whether to write it as if it were told by the Great Detective himself. But the Great Detective is above that. For

one thing, he's too silent. And in any case, if he told the story himself, his modesty might hold him back from fully explaining how terribly clever he is, and how wonderful his deductions are.

So the nearly universal method has come to be that the story is told through the mouth of an Inferior Person, a friend and confidant of the Great Detective. This humble associate has the special function of being lost in admiration all the time.

In fact, this friend, taken at his own face value, must be regarded as a Poor Nut. Witness the way in which his brain breaks down utterly and is set going again by the Great Detective. The scene occurs when the Great Detective begins to observe all the things around the place that were overlooked by Inspector Higginbottom.

*"'But how,' I exclaimed, 'how in the name of all that is incomprehensible, are you able to aver that the criminal wore rubbers?'"*

*"My friend smiled quietly."*

*"'You observe,' he said, 'that patch of fresh mud about ten feet square in front of the door of the house. If you would look, you will see that it has been freshly walked over by a man with rubbers on.'"*

*"I looked. The marks of the rubbers were there plain enough—at least a dozen of them."*

*"'What a fool I was!' I exclaimed. 'But at least tell me how you were able to know the length of the criminal's foot?'"*

*"My friend smiled again, his same inscrutable smile."*

*"'By measuring the print of the rubber,' he answered quietly, 'and then subtracting from it the thickness of the material multiplied by two.'"*

*"'Multiplied by two!' I exclaimed. 'Why by two?'"*

*"'For the toe and the heel.'"*

*"'Idiot that I am,' I cried, 'it all seems so plain when you explain it.'"*

In other words, the Poor Nut makes an admirable narrator. However much fogged the reader may get, he has at least the comfort of knowing that the Nut is far more fogged than he is. Indeed, the Nut may be said, in a way, to personify the ideal reader, that is to say the stupidest—the reader who is most completely bamboozled with the mystery, and yet intensely interested.

Such a reader has the support of knowing that the police are entirely "baffled"—that's always the word for them; that the public are "mystified"; that the authorities are "alarmed"; the newspapers "in the dark"; and the Poor Nut, altogether up a tree. On those terms, the reader can enjoy his own ignorance to the full.

A first-class insoluble crime having thus been well started, and with the Poor Nut narrating it with his ingenuous interest, the next stage in the mechanism of the story is to bring out the personality of the Great Detective, and to show how terribly clever he is.

## II

When a detective story gets well started—when the "body" has been duly found—and the "butler" or the "janitor" has been arrested—when the police have been completely "baffled"—then is the time when the Great Detective is brought in and gets to work.

But before he can work at all, or at least be made thoroughly satisfactory to the up-to-date reader, it is necessary to touch him up. He can be made extremely tall and extremely thin, or even "cadaverous." Why a cadaverous man can solve a mystery better than a fat man it is hard to say; presumably the thinner a man is, the more acute is his mind. At any rate, the old school of writers preferred to have their detectives lean. This incidentally gave the detective a face "like a hawk," the writer not realizing that a hawk is one of the stupidest of animals. A detective with a face like an ourang-outang would beat it all to bits.

Indeed, the Great Detective's face becomes even more important than his body. Here there is absolute unanimity. His face has to be "inscrutable." Look at it though you will, you can never read it. Contrast it, for example, with the face of Inspector Higginbottom, of the local police force. Here is a face that can look "surprised," or "relieved," or, with great ease, "completely baffled."

But the face of the Great Detective knows of no such changes. No wonder the Poor Nut, as we may call the person who is supposed to narrate the story, is completely mystified. From the face of the great man you can't tell whether the cart in which they are driving jolts him or whether the food at the Inn gives him indigestion.



To the Great Detective's face there used to be added the old-time expedient of not allowing him either to eat or drink. And when it was added that during this same period of about eight days the sleuth never slept, the reader could realize in what fine shape his brain would be for working out his "inexorable chain of logic."

But nowadays this is changed. The Great Detective not only eats, but he eats well. Often he is presented as a connoisseur in food. Thus:

*"'Stop a bit,' thus speaks the Great Detective to the Poor Nut and Inspector Higginbottom, whom he is dragging round with him as usual; 'we have half an hour before the train leaves Paddington. Let us have some dinner. I know an Italian restaurant near here where they serve frogs' legs à la Marengo better than anywhere else in London.'*

*"A few minutes later we were seated at one of the tables of a dingy little eating-place whose signboard with the words 'Restauranto Italiano' led me to the deduction that it was an Italian restaurant. I was amazed to observe that my friend was evidently well known in the place, while his order for 'three glasses of Chianti with two drops of vermicelli in each,' called for an obsequious bow from the appreciative padrone. I realized that this amazing man knew as much of the finesse of Italian wines as he did of playing the saxophone."*

We may go further. In many up-to-date cases the detective not only gets plenty to eat, but a liberal allowance of strong drink. One generous British author of to-day is never tired of handing out to the Great Detective and his friends what he calls a "stiff whisky and soda." At all moments of crisis they get one.

For example, when they find the Body of Sir Charles Althorpe, late owner of Althorpe Chase, a terrible sight, lying on the floor of the library, what do they do? They reach at once to the sideboard and pour themselves out a "stiff whisky and soda." Or when the heroine learns that her guardian Sir Charles is dead and that she is his heiress and when she is about to faint, what do they do? They immediately pour "a stiff whisky and soda" into her. It is



certainly a great method.

But in the main we may say that all this stuff about eating and drinking has lost its importance. The great detective has to be made exceptional by some other method.

And here is where his music comes in. It transpires—not at once but in the first pause in the story—that this great man not only can solve a crime, but has the most extraordinary aptitude for music, especially for dreamy music of the most difficult kind. As soon as he is left in the Inn room with the Poor Nut out comes his saxophone and he tunes it up.

*“‘What were you playing?’ I asked, as my friend at last folded his beloved instrument into its case.*

*“‘Beethoven’s Sonata in Q,’ he answered modestly.*

*“‘Good Heavens!’ I exclaimed.”*

Another popular method of making the Great Detective a striking character is to show him as possessing a strange and varied range of knowledge. For example, the Poor Nut is talking with a third person, the Great Detective being apparently sunk in reveries. In the course of the conversation the name of Constantinople is mentioned.

*“I was hardly aware that my friend was hearing what was said.*

*“He looked up quietly.*

*“‘Constantinople?’ he said. ‘That was the capital of Turkey, was it not?’*

*“I could not help marvelling again how this strange being could have acquired his minute and varied knowledge.”*

The Great Detective’s personality having been thus arranged, he is brought along with the Poor Nut and Inspector Higginbottom to Althorpe Chase and it is now up to him to start to “solve” the mystery. Till a little while ago, the favourite way of having him do this was by means of tracks, footprints, and other traces. This method, which has now worn threadbare, had a tremendous vogue. According to it, the Great Detective never questioned anybody.

But his real work was done right at the scene of the crime, crawling round on the carpet of the library, and wriggling about on the grass outside. After he has got up after two days of crawling, with a broken blade of grass, he would sit down on a stone and play the saxophone and then announce that the mystery is solved and tell Inspector Higginbottom whom to arrest. That was all. He would not explain anything but what the Poor Nut, half crazy with mystification, begged him to do.

*"'The case,' he at last explained very airily, 'has been a simple one, but not without its features of interest.'*

*"'Simple!' I exclaimed.*

*"'Precisely,' said he; 'you see this blade of grass. You tell me that you see nothing. Look at it again under this lense. What do you see? The letters ACK clearly stamped, but in reverse, on the soft green of the grass. What do they mean?'*

*"'Nothing,' I groaned.*

*"'You are wrong,' he said; 'they are the last three letters of the word DACK, the name of a well-known shoemaker in Market Croydon four miles west of the Chase.'*

*"'Good Heavens,' I said.*

*"'Now look at this soft piece of mud which I have baked and which carries a similar stamp—ILTON.'*

*"'Ilton, Ilton,' I repeated, 'I fear it means less than ever.'*

*"'To you,' he said. 'Because you do not observe. Did you never note that makers of trousers nowadays stamp their trouser buttons with their names? These letters are the concluding part of the name BILTON, one of the best-known tailors of Kings Croft, four miles east of the Chase.'*

*"'Good Heavens!' I cried. 'I begin to see.'*

*"'Do you?' he said drily. 'Then no doubt you can piece together the analysis. Our criminal is wearing a pair of trousers, bought in Kings Croft, and a shoe bought in Market Croydon. What do you infer as to where he lives?'*

*"'Good Heavens,' I said, 'I begin to see it!'*

*"'Exactly,' said the Great Detective. 'He lives halfway between the two!'*

*"'At the Chase itself!' I cried. 'What a fool I have been.'*

*"'You have,' he answered quietly."*

But unfortunately the public has begun to find this method of traces and tracks a "bit thick." All these fond old literary fictions are crumbling away.

#### THE METHOD OF RECONDITE KNOWLEDGE

In fact, they are being very largely replaced by the newer and much more showy expedient that can be called the Method of Recondite Knowledge. The Great Detective is equipped with a sort of super-scientific knowledge of things, materials, substances, chemistry, actions, and reactions that would give him a Ph.D. degree in any school of applied science.

Some of the best detectives of the higher fiction of to-day even maintain a laboratory and a couple of assistants. When they have this, all they need is a little piece of dust or a couple of micrometer sections and the criminal is as good as caught.

Thus, let us suppose that in the present instance Sir Charles Althorpe has been done to death—as so many "elderly gentlemen" were in the fiction of twenty years ago—by the intrusion into his library of a sailor with a wooden leg newly landed from Java. Formerly the crime would have been traced by the top heaviness of his wooden leg—when the man drank beer at the Althorpe Arms, his elbow on the side away from his leg would have left an impression on the bar, similar to the one left where he climbed the window sill.

But in the newer type of story the few grains of dust found near the Body would turn out to be specks from the fiber of Java cocoanut, such as is seen only on the decks of ships newly arrived from Java, and on the clothes of the sailors.

But, by the one method or the other method, the "inexorable chain of logic" can be completed to the last link. The writer can't go on forever; sooner or later he must own up and say who did it. After two hundred pages, he finds himself up against the brutal necessity of selecting his actual murderer.

So, now then, who did it? Which brings us to the final phase of the Detective Story. Who really killed Sir Charles?

## III

## THE TRAMP SOLUTION

According to one very simple expedient, the murder was not committed by any of the principal characters at all. It was committed *by a tramp*. It transpires that the tramp was passing the Chase late that night and was attracted by the light behind the curtain (as tramps are apt to be), and came and peered through the window (as tramps love to do), and when he saw Sir Charles asleep in his chair with the gold watch on the table beside him, he got one of those sudden impulses (such as tramps get when they see a gold watch), and, before he knew what he had done, he had lifted the window and slipped into the room.

Sir Charles woke—and there you are. All quite simple. Indeed, but for the telltale marks on the grass, or the telltale fiber on the carpet, or the telltale something, the murderer would never have been known.

And yet the solution seems paltry. It seems a shame to drag in the poor tattered creature at the very end and introduce and hang him all in one page.

So we have to look round for some other plan.

THE MURDER WAS COMMITTED BY SOMEBODY ELSE  
ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT

A solution, which is a prime favourite with at least one very distinguished contemporary author, is to have it turn out that the murder has been *committed by somebody else altogether different*. In other words, it was committed by some casual person who just came into the story for about one half a second.

Let us make up a simple example. At the Althorpe Arms Inn where the Great Detective and the Poor Nut are staying while they investigate the death of Sir Charles, we bring in, just for one minute, "*a burly-looking man in a check suit drinking a glass of ale in the bar.*" We ask him quite casually, if he can tell us anything about the state of the road to Farringham. He answers in a surly way that he's a stranger to these parts and knows nothing of it. That's all. He doesn't come in any more till the very end.



But a really experienced reader ought to guess at once that he committed the murder. Look at it: he's burly; and he's surly; and he has a check suit; and he drinks ale; and he's a stranger; that's enough. Any good law court could hang him for that—in a detective story, anyway.

When at last the truth dawns on the Poor Nut.

*"'Great Heavens,' I exclaimed, 'the man in the check suit!'*

*"The Great Detective nodded.*

*"'But how on earth!' I exclaimed, more mystified than ever, 'were you ever led to suspect it?'*

*"'From the very first,' said my friend, turning to Inspector Higginbottom, who nodded in confirmation, 'we had a strong clew.'*

*"'A clew!' I exclaimed.*

*"'Yes, one of the checks on his coat had been cached.'*

*"'Cashed,' I cried.*

*"'You misunderstood me; not "cached," CACHED. He had cut it out and hidden it. A man who cuts out a part of his coat and hides it on the day after a crime is probably concealing something.'*

*"'Great Heavens!' I exclaimed, 'how obvious it sounds when you put it that way. To think that I never thought of it!'"*

#### THE SOLUTION OF THE THOROUGHLY DANGEROUS WOMAN

According to this method, the crime was committed by a thoroughly bad, thoroughly dangerous woman, generally half foreign—which is supposed to account for a lot. She has just come into the story casually—as a nurse, or as an assistant bookkeeper, or, more usual and much better, as a "discarded flame" of somebody or other.

These discarded flames flicker all through detective literature as a terrible warning to persons of a fickle disposition. In any case, great reliance is placed on foreign blood as accounting for her. For Anglo-Saxon readers, if you put a proper quantity of foreign blood into a nurse and then discard her, that will do the trick every time.

To show how thoroughly bad she is, the Dangerous Woman used to be introduced by the writers of the Victorian age as smoking a cigarette. She also wore "high-heeled shoes and a skirt that reached barely to her ankles." In our time, she would have to do



a little better than that. In short, as the key to a murder, we must pass her by. She would get acquitted every time.

Let us try something else.

THE SOLUTION THAT THE MURDER WAS COMMITTED BY BLUE  
EDWARD

According to this explanation of the mysterious crime, it turns out, right at the end of the story, that the murder was not done by any of the people suspected—neither by the Butler, nor the Half Hero, nor the Tramp, nor the Dangerous Woman. Not at all. It was the work of one of the most audacious criminals ever heard of (except that the reader never heard of him till this second), the head and brain of a whole gang of criminals, ramifying all over Hades.

This head criminal generally goes under some such terrible name as Black Pete, or Yellow Charlie, or Blue Edward. As soon as his name is mentioned, then at once not only the Great Detective but everybody else knows all about him—except only the reader and the Nut, who is always used as a proxy for the reader in matters of astonishment or simplicity of mind.

At the very height of the chase, a new murder, that of a deputy police inspector (they come cheap; it's not like killing one of the regular characters), is added to the main crime of killing Sir Charles. The manner of the murder—by means of a dropping bullet fired three miles away with its trajectory computed by algebra—has led to the arrest. The Great Detective, *calculating back the path of the bullet*, has ordered by telephone the arrest of a man three miles away. As the Detective, the Nut, and the police stand looking at the body of the murdered policeman, word comes from Scotland Yard that the arrest is made:

*"The Great Detective stood looking about him, quietly shaking his head. His eye rested a moment on the prostrate body of Sub-Inspector Bradshaw, then turned to scrutinize the neat hole drilled in the glass of the window.*

*"'I see it all now,' he murmured. 'I should have guessed it sooner. There is no doubt whose work this is.'*

*"'Who is it?' I asked.*

*"'Blue Edward,' he announced quietly.*

*"'Blue Edward!' I exclaimed.*

*"'Blue Edward,' he repeated.*

*"'Blue Edward!' I reiterated, 'but who then is Blue Edward?'"*

This, of course, is the very question that the reader is wanting to ask. Who on earth is Blue Edward? The question is answered at once by the Great Detective himself.

*"The fact that you have never heard of Blue Edward merely shows the world that you have lived in. As a matter of fact, Blue Edward is the terror of four continents. We have traced him to Shanghai, only to find him in Madagascar. It was he who organized the terrible robbery at Irkutsk in which ten mujiks were blown up with a bottle of Epsom salts.*

*"It was Blue Edward who for years held the whole of Philadelphia in abject terror, and kept Oshkosh, Wisconsin, on the jump for even longer. At the head of a gang of criminals that ramifies all over the known globe, equipped with a scientific education that enables him to read and write and use a typewriter with the greatest ease, Blue Edward has practically held the police of the world at bay for years.*

*"I suspected his hand in this from the start. From the very outset, certain evidences pointed to the work of Blue Edward.'"*

After which all the police inspectors and spectators keep shaking their heads and murmuring, "Blue Edward, Blue Edward," until the reader is sufficiently impressed.

#### IV

The writing of a detective story, without a doubt, gets harder and harder towards the end. It is not merely the difficulty of finding a suitable criminal; there is added the difficulty of knowing what to do with him. It is a tradition of three centuries of novel writing that a story ought to end happily. But in this case, how end up happily?

For example, here we have Blue Edward, caught at last, with

handcuffs on his wrists—Blue Edward, the most dangerous criminal that ever interwove the underworld into a solid mesh; Blue Edward, who—well, in fact, the whole aim of the writer only a little while before was to show what a heller Blue Edward was. True, we never heard of him until near the end of the book, but when he *did* get in we were told that his Gang had ramified all the way from Sicily to Oklahoma. Now, what are we to do?

If it is not Blue Edward, then we've got to hang the Tramp—the poor tattered creature who fried potatoes by the hedge. But we are called upon to notice that now he has “a singularly vacant eye.” You can hardly hang a man with a vacant eye. It doesn't do.

What if we send him to prison for life? But that's pretty cold stuff, too—sitting looking at four stone walls with a vacant eye for forty years. In fact, the more we think of it, the less satisfied we are with hanging the Tramp. Personally I'd rather hang Meadows the Butler, as we first set out to do, or I'd hang the Nut or the Thoroughly Bad Woman, or any of them.

In the older fiction, they used to face this problem fairly and squarely. They hanged them—and apparently they liked it. But nowadays we can't do it. We have lost the old-fashioned solid satisfaction in it, so we have to look round for another solution. Here is one, a very favourite one with our sensitive generation. If I had to give it a name, I would call it—

#### THE CRIMINAL WITH THE HACKING COUGH

The method of it is very simple. Blue Edward, or whoever is to be “it,” is duly caught. There's no doubt of his guilt. But at the moment when the Great Detective and the Ignorant Police are examining him he develops a “hacking cough.” Indeed, as he starts to make his confession, he can hardly talk for hacks.

*“‘Well,’ says the criminal, looking round at the little group of police officers, ‘the game is up—hack! hack!—and I may as well make a clean breast of it—hack, hack, hack.’”*

Any trained reader when he hears these hacks knows exactly what they are to lead up to. The criminal, robust though he seemed only a chapter ago when he jumped through a three-story window

after throttling Sub-Inspector Juggins half to death, is a dying man. He has got one of those terrible diseases known to fiction as a "mortal complaint." It wouldn't do to give it an exact name, or somebody might get busy and cure it. The symptoms are a hacking cough and a great mildness of manner, an absence of all profanity, and a tendency to call everybody "you gentlemen." Those things spell finis.

In fact, all that is needed now is for the Great Detective himself to say, "*Gentlemen*" (they are all gentlemen at this stage of the story), "*a higher conviction than any earthly law has, et cetera, et cetera.*" With that, the curtain is dropped, and it is understood that the criminal made his exit the same night.

That's better, decidedly better. And yet, lacking in cheerfulness, somehow.

It is just about as difficult to deal with the Thoroughly Bad Woman. The general procedure is to make her raise a terrible scene. When she is at last rounded up and caught, she doesn't "go quietly" like the criminal with the hacking cough or the repentant Tramp. Not at all. She raises—in fact, she is made to raise so much that the reader will be content to waive any prejudice about the disposition of criminals, to get her out of the story.

*"The woman's face as Inspector Higginbottom snapped the handcuffs on her wrists was livid with fury.*

*"Gur-r-r-r-r! she hissed."*

(This is her favourite exclamation, and shows the high percentage of her foreign blood.)

*"Gur-r-r-r-r! I hate you all. Do what you like with me. I would kill him again a thousand times, the old fool."*

*"She turned furiously towards my friend (the Great Detective).*

*"As for you," she said, 'I hate you. Gur-r-r! See, I spit at you. Gur-r-r-r!'"*

In that way, the Great Detective gets his, though, of course, his impassive face never showed a sign. Spitting on him doesn't faze

him. Then she turns on the Heroine and gives her what's coming to her.

*"And you! Gur-r-r! I despise you, with your baby face! Gur-r-r! And now you think you will marry him! I laugh at you! Ha! Ha! Hahula!"*

And after that she turns on the Nut and gives him some, and then some for Inspector Higginbottom, and thus with three "Gur-r-r's" for everybody and a "Ha! ha!" as a tiger, off she goes.

But, take it which way you will, the ending is never satisfactory. Not even the glad news that the Heroine sank into the Poor Nut's arms, never to leave them again, can relieve the situation. Not even the knowledge that they erected a handsome memorial to Sir Charles, or that the Great Detective played the saxophone for a week can quite compensate us.



## MY REVELATIONS AS A SPY

IN many people the very name "Spy" excites a shudder of apprehension; we Spies, in fact, get quite used to being shuddered at. None of us Spies mind it at all. Whenever I enter a hotel and register myself as a Spy I am quite accustomed to see a thrill of fear run round the clerks, or clerk, behind the desk.

Us Spies or We Spies—for we call ourselves both—are thus a race apart. None know us. All fear us. Where do we live? Nowhere. Where are we? Everywhere. Frequently we don't know ourselves where we are. The secret orders that we receive come from so high up that it is often forbidden to us even to ask where we are. A friend of mine, or at least a Fellow Spy—us spies have no friends—one of the most brilliant men in the Hungarian Secret Service, once spent a month in New York under the impression that he was in Winnipeg. If this happened to the most brilliant, think of the others.

All, I say, fear us. Because they know and have reason to know our power. Hence, in spite of the prejudice against us, we are able to move everywhere, to lodge in the best hotels, and enter any society that we wish to penetrate.

Let me relate an incident to illustrate this: A month ago I entered one of the largest of the New York hotels which I will merely call the B. hotel without naming it: to do so might blast it. We spies, in fact, never *name* a hotel. At the most we indicate it by a number known only to ourselves, such as 1, 2, or 3.

On my presenting myself at the desk the clerk informed me that he had no room vacant. I knew this of course to be a mere subterfuge; whether or not he suspected that I was a spy I cannot say. I was muffled up, to avoid recognition, in a long overcoat with the collar turned up and reaching well above my ears, while the black beard and the moustache, that I had slipped on in entering the hotel, concealed my face. "Let me speak a moment to the manager,"

I said. When he came I beckoned him aside and taking his ear in my hand I breathed two words into it. "Good heavens!" he gasped, while his face turned as pale as ashes. "Is it enough?" I asked. "Can I have a room, or must I breathe again?" "No, no," said the manager, still trembling. Then, turning to the clerk: "Give this gentleman a room," he said, "and give him a bath."

What these two words are that will get a room in New York at once I must not divulge. Even now, when the veil of secrecy is being lifted, the international interests involved are too complicated to permit it. Suffice it to say that if these two had failed I know a couple of others still better.

I narrate this incident, otherwise trivial, as indicating the astounding ramifications and the ubiquity of the international spy system. A similar illustration occurs to me as I write. I was walking the other day with another gentleman—on upper B. way between the T. Building and the W. Garden.

"Do you see that man over there?" I said, pointing from the side of the street on which we were walking on the sidewalk to the other side opposite to the side that we were on.

"The man with the straw hat?" he asked. "Yes, what of him?"

"Oh, nothing," I answered, "except that he's a Spy!"

"Great heavens!" exclaimed my acquaintance, leaning up against a lamppost for support. "A Spy! How do you know that? What does it mean?"

I gave a quiet laugh—we spies learn to laugh very quietly. "Ha!" I said, "that is *my* secret, my friend. *Verbum sapientius! Che sarà sarà! Yodel doodle doo!*"

My acquaintance fell in a dead faint upon the street. I watched them take him away in an ambulance. Will the reader be surprised to learn that among the white-coated attendants who removed him I recognized no less a person than the famous Russian spy Poulispantzoff. What he was doing there I could not tell. No doubt his orders came from so high up that he himself did not know. I had seen him only twice before—once when we were both disguised as Zulus at Buluwayo, and once in the interior of China, at the time when Poulispantzoff made his secret entry into Thibet concealed in a tea-case. He was inside the tea-case when I saw him; so at least I was informed by the coolies who carried it. Yet I

recognized him instantly. Neither he nor I, however, gave any sign of recognition other than an imperceptible movement of the outer eyelid. (We spies learn to move the outer lid of the eye so imperceptibly that it cannot be seen.) Yet after meeting Poulispantzoff in this way I was not surprised to read in the evening papers a few hours afterward that the uncle of the young King of Siam had been assassinated. The connection between these two events I am unfortunately not at liberty to explain; the consequences to the Vatican would be too serious. I doubt if it could remain top-side up.

These, however, are but passing incidents in a life filled with danger and excitement. They would have remained unrecorded and unrevealed, like the rest of my revelations, were it not that certain recent events have to some extent removed the seal of secrecy from my lips. The death of a certain royal sovereign makes it possible for me to divulge things hitherto undivulgable. Even now I can only tell a part, a small part, of the terrific things that I know. When more sovereigns die I can divulge more. I hope to keep on divulging at intervals for years. But I am compelled to be cautious. My relations with the Wilhelmstrasse, with Downing Street and the Quai d'Orsay, have been so intimate, and my footing with the Yildiz Kiosk and the Waldorf-Astoria and Childs Restaurants are so delicate, that a single *faux pas* might prove to be a false step.

It is now seventeen years since I entered the Secret Service of the G. empire. During this time my activities have taken me into every quarter of the globe, at times even into every eighth or sixteenth of it. It was I who first brought back word to the Imperial Chancellor of the existence of an Entente between England and France. "Is there an entente?" he asked me, trembling with excitement. "Your Excellency," I said, "there is." He groaned. "Can you stop it?" he asked.

"Don't ask me," I said sadly. "Where must we strike?" demanded the Chancellor. "Fetch me a map," I said. They did so. I placed my finger on the map. "Quick, quick," said the Chancellor, "look where his finger is." They lifted it up. "Morocco!" they cried. I had meant it for Abyssinia but it was too late to change. That night the warship *Panther* sailed under sealed orders. The rest is history, or at least history and geography.

I shall always feel, to my regret, that I am personally responsible

for the outbreak of the great war. It may have had ulterior causes. But there is no doubt that it was precipitated by the fact that, for the first time in seventeen years, I took a six weeks' vacation in June and July of 1914. The consequences of this careless step I ought to have foreseen. Yet I took such precautions as I could. "Do you think," I asked, "that you can preserve the *status quo* for six weeks, merely six weeks, if I stop spying and take a rest?" "We'll try," they answered. "Remember," I said, as I packed my things, "keep the Dardanelles closed; have the Sandjak of Novi Bazar properly patrolled, and let the Dobrudja remain under a *modus vivendi* till I come back."

Two months later, while sitting sipping my coffee at a *Karhof* in the Schwarzwald, I read in the newspapers that a German army had invaded France and was fighting the French, and that the English expeditionary force had crossed the Channel. "This," I said to myself, "means war." As usual, I was right.

It is needless for me to recount here the life of busy activity that falls to a Spy in wartime. It was necessary for me to be here, there and everywhere, visiting all the best hotels, watering-places, summer resorts, theatres, and places of amusement. It was necessary, moreover, to act with the utmost caution and to assume an air of careless indolence in order to lull suspicion asleep. With this end in view I made a practice of never rising till ten in the morning. I breakfasted with great leisure, and contented myself with passing the morning in a quiet stroll, taking care, however, to keep my ears open. After lunch I generally feigned a light sleep, keeping my ears shut. A *table d'hôte* dinner, followed by a visit to the theatre, brought the strenuous day to a close. Few spies, I venture to say, worked harder than I did.

It was during the third year of the war that I received a peremptory summons from the head of the Imperial Secret Service at Berlin, Baron Fisch von Gestern. "I want to see you," it read. Nothing more. In the life of a Spy one learns to think quickly, and to think is to act. I gathered as soon as I received the despatch that for some reason or other Fisch von Gestern was anxious to see me, having, as I instantly inferred, something to say to me. This conjecture proved correct.



The Baron rose at my entrance with military correctness and shook hands.

"Are you willing," he inquired, "to undertake a mission to America?"

"I am," I answered.

"Very good. How soon can you start?"

"As soon as I have paid the few bills that I owe in Berlin," I replied.

"We can hardly wait for that," said my chief, "and in case it might excite comment, you must start to-night!"

"Very good," I said.

"Such," said the Baron, "are the orders. Here is an American passport and a photograph that will answer the purpose. The likeness is not great, but it is sufficient."

"But," I objected, abashed for a moment, "this photograph is of a man with whiskers and I am, unfortunately, clean-shaven."

"The orders are imperative," said Von Gestern, with official hauteur. "You must start to-night. You can grow whiskers this afternoon."

"Very good," I replied.

"And now to the business of your mission," continued the Baron. "The United States, as you have perhaps heard, is making war against Germany."

"I have heard so," I replied.

"Yes," continued Von Gestern. "The fact has leaked out—how we do not know—and is being widely reported. His Imperial Majesty has decided to stop the war with the United States." I bowed.

"He intends to send over a secret treaty of the same nature as the one recently made with his recent Highness the recent Czar of Russia. Under this treaty Germany proposes to give to the United States the whole of equatorial Africa and in return the United States is to give to Germany the whole of China. There are other provisions, but I need not trouble you with them. Your mission relates, not to the actual treaty, but to the preparation of the ground." I bowed again.

"You are aware, I presume," continued the Baron, "that in all high international dealings, at least in Europe, the ground has to be prepared. A hundred threads must be unravelled. This the Imperial



Government itself cannot stoop to do. The work must be done by agents like yourself. You understand all this already, no doubt?" I indicated my assent.

"These, then, are your instructions," said the Baron, speaking slowly and distinctly, as if to impress his words upon my memory. "On your arrival in the United States you will follow the accredited methods that are known to be used by all the best spies of the highest diplomacy. You have no doubt read some of the books, almost manuals of instruction, that they have written?"

"I have read many of them," I said.

"Very well. You will enter, that is to say, enter and move everywhere in the best society. Mark specially, please, that you must not only *enter* it but you must *move*. You must, if I may put it so, get a move on." I bowed.

"You must mix freely with the members of the Cabinet. You must dine with them. This is a most necessary matter and one to be kept well in mind. Dine with them often in such a way as to make yourself familiar to them. Will you do this?"

"I will," I said.

"Very good. Remember also that in order to mask your purpose you must constantly be seen with the most fashionable and most beautiful women of the American capital. Can you do this?"

"Can I?" I said.

"You must if need be"—and the Baron gave a most significant look which was not lost upon me—"carry on an intrigue with one or, better, with several of them. Are you ready for it?"

"More than ready," I said.

"Very good. But this is only a part. You are expected also to familiarize yourself with the leaders of the great financial interests. You are to put yourself on such a footing with them as to borrow large sums of money from them. Do you object to this?"

"No," I said frankly, "I do not."

"Good! You will also mingle freely in Ambassadorial and foreign circles. It would be well for you to dine, at least once a week, with the British Ambassador. And now one final word"—here Von Gestern spoke with singular impressiveness—"as to the President of the United States."

"Yes," I said.

"You must mix with him on a footing of the most open-handed friendliness. Be at the White House continually. Make yourself in the fullest sense of the words the friend and adviser of the President. All this I think is clear. In fact, it is only what is done, as you know, by all the masters of international diplomacy."

"Precisely," I said.

"Very good. And then," continued the Baron, "as soon as you find yourself sufficiently *en rapport* with everybody—or I should say," he added in correction, for the Baron shares fully in the present German horror of imported French words, "when you find yourself sufficiently in enggeknüpfterverwandtschaft with everybody, you may then proceed to advance your peace terms. And now, my dear fellow," said the Baron, with a touch of genuine cordiality, "one word more. Are you in need of money?"

"Yes," I said.

"I thought so. But you will find that you need it less and less as you go on. Meantime, good-bye, and best wishes for your mission."

Such was, such is, in fact, the mission with which I am accredited. I regard it as by far the most important mission with which I have been accredited by the Wilhelmstrasse. Yet I am compelled to admit that up to the present it has proved unsuccessful. My attempts to carry it out have been baffled. There is something perhaps in the atmosphere of this republic which obstructs the working of high diplomacy. For over five months now I have been waiting and willing to dine with the American Cabinet. They have not invited me. For four weeks I sat each night waiting in the J. hotel in Washington with my suit on ready to be asked. They did not come near me.

Nor have I yet received an intimation from the British Embassy inviting me to an informal lunch or to midnight supper with the Ambassador. Everybody who knows anything of the inside working of the international spy system will realize that without these invitations one can do nothing. Nor has the President of the United States given any sign. I have sent word to him, in cipher, that I am ready to dine with him on any day that may be convenient to both of us. He has made no move in the matter.

Under these circumstances an intrigue with any of the leaders of fashionable society has proved impossible. My attempts to approach

them have been misunderstood—in fact, have led to my being invited to leave the J. hotel. The fact that I was compelled to leave it, owing to reasons that I cannot reveal, without paying my account, has occasioned unnecessary and dangerous comment. I connect it, in fact, with the singular attitude adopted by the B. hotel on my arrival in New York, to which I have already referred.

I have therefore been compelled to fall back on revelations and disclosures. Here again I find the American atmosphere singularly uncongenial. I have offered to reveal to the Secretary of State the entire family history of Ferdinand of Bulgaria for fifty dollars. He says it is not worth it. I have offered to the British Embassy the inside story of the Abdication of Constantine for five dollars. They say they know it and knew it before it happened. I have offered, for little more than a nominal sum, to blacken the character of every reigning family in Germany. I am told that it is not necessary.

Meantime, as it is impossible to return to Central Europe, I expect to open either a fruit store or a peanut stand very shortly in this great metropolis. I imagine that many of my former colleagues will soon be doing the same!

## MADDENED BY MYSTERY OR THE DEFECTIVE DETECTIVE

THE Great Detective sat in his office.

He wore a long green gown and half a dozen secret badges pinned to the outside of it.

Three or four pairs of false whiskers hung on a whisker-stand beside him.

Goggles, blue spectacles and motor glasses lay within easy reach. He could completely disguise himself at a second's notice.

Half a bucket of cocaine and a dipper stood on a chair at his elbow.

His face was absolutely impenetrable.

A pile of cryptograms lay on the desk. The Great Detective hastily tore them open one after the other, solved them, and threw them down the cryptogram-shute at his side.

There was a rap at the door.

The Great Detective hurriedly wrapped himself in a pink domino, adjusted a pair of false black whiskers and cried,

"Come in."

His secretary entered. "Ha," said the detective, "it is you!"

He laid aside his disguise.

"Sir," said the young man in intense excitement, "a mystery has been committed!"

"Ha!" said the Great Detective, his eye kindling, "is it such as to completely baffle the police of the entire continent?"

"They are so completely baffled with it," said the secretary, "that they are lying collapsed in heaps; many of them have committed suicide."

"So," said the detective, "and is the mystery one that is absolutely unparalleled in the whole recorded annals of the London police?"

"It is."

"And I suppose," said the detective, "that it involves names which you would scarcely dare to breathe, at least without first using some kind of atomizer or throat-gargle."

"Exactly."

"And it is connected, I presume, with the highest diplomatic consequences, so that if we fail to solve it England will be at war with the whole world in sixteen minutes?"

His secretary, still quivering with excitement, again answered yes.

"And finally," said the Great Detective, "I presume that it was committed in broad daylight, in some such place as the entrance of the Bank of England, or in the cloak-room of the House of Commons, and under the very eyes of the police?"

"Those," said the secretary, "are the very conditions of the mystery."

"Good," said the Great Detective, "now wrap yourself in this disguise, put on these brown whiskers and tell me what it is."

The secretary wrapped himself in a blue domino with lace insertions, then, bending over, he whispered in the ear of the Great Detective:

"The Prince of Wurttemberg has been kidnapped."

The Great Detective bounded from his chair as if he had been kicked from below.

A prince stolen! Evidently a Bourbon! The scion of one of the oldest families in Europe kidnapped. Here was a mystery indeed worthy of his analytical brain.

His mind began to move like lightning.

"Stop!" he said, "how do you know this?"

The secretary handed him a telegram. It was from the Prefect of Police of Paris. It read: "The Prince of Wurttemberg stolen. Probably forwarded to London. Must have him here for the opening day of Exhibition. £1,000 reward."

So! The Prince had been kidnapped out of Paris at the very time when his appearance at the International Exposition would have been a political event of the first magnitude.

With the Great Detective to think was to act, and to act was to think. Frequently he could do both together.

"Wire to Paris for a description of the Prince."



The secretary bowed and left.

At the same moment there was slight scratching at the door.

A visitor entered. He crawled stealthily on his hands and knees. A hearthrug thrown over his head and shoulders disguised his identity.

He crawled to the middle of the room.

Then he rose.

Great Heaven!

It was the Prime Minister of England.

"You!" said the detective.

"Me," said the Prime Minister.

"You have come in regard to the kidnapping of the Prince of Wurttemberg?"

The Prime Minister started.

"How do you know?" he said.

The Great Detective smiled his inscrutable smile.

"Yes," said the Prime Minister. "I will use no concealment. I am interested, deeply interested. Find the Prince of Wurttemberg, get him safe back to Paris and I will add £500 to the reward already offered. But listen," he said impressively as he left the room, "see to it that no attempt is made to alter the marking of the prince, or to clip his tail."

So! To clip the Prince's tail! The brain of the Great Detective reeled. So! a gang of miscreants had conspired to—but no! the thing was not possible.

There was another rap at the door.

A second visitor was seen. He wormed his way in, lying almost prone upon his stomach, and wriggling across the floor. He was enveloped in a long purple cloak. He stood up and peeped over the top of it.

Great Heaven!

It was the Archbishop of Canterbury!

"Your Grace!" exclaimed the detective in amazement—"pray do not stand, I beg you. Sit down, lie down, anything rather than stand."

The Archbishop took off his mitre and laid it wearily on the whisker-stand.

"You are here in regard to the Prince of Wurttemberg."

The Archbishop started and crossed himself. Was the man a magician?

"Yes," he said, "much depends on getting him back. But I have only come to say this: my sister is desirous of seeing you. She is coming here. She has been extremely indiscreet and her fortune hangs upon the Prince. Get him back to Paris or I fear she will be ruined."

The Archbishop regained his mitre, uncrossed himself, wrapped his cloak about him, and crawled stealthily out on his hands and knees, purring like a cat.

The face of the Great Detective showed the most profound sympathy. It ran up and down in furrows. "So," he muttered, "the sister of the Archbishop, the Countess of Dashleigh!" Accustomed as he was to the life of the aristocracy, even the Great Detective felt that there was here intrigue of more than customary complexity.

There was a loud rapping at the door.

There entered the Countess of Dashleigh. She was all in furs.

She was the most beautiful woman in England. She strode imperiously into the room. She seized a chair imperiously and seated herself on it, imperial side up.

She took off her tiara of diamonds and put it on the tiara-holder beside her and uncoiled her boa of pearls and put it on the pearl-stand.

"You have come," said the Great Detective, "about the Prince of Wurtemberg."

"Wretched little pup!" said the Countess of Dashleigh in disgust.

So! A further complication! Far from being in love with the Prince, the Countess denounced the young Bourbon as a pup!

"You are interested in him, I believe."

"Interested!" said the Countess. "I should rather say so. Why, I bred him!"

"You which?" gasped the Great Detective, his usually impassive features suffused with a carmine blush.

"I bred him," said the Countess, "and I've got £10,000 upon his chances, so no wonder I want him back in Paris. Only listen," she said, "if they've got hold of the Prince and cut his tail or spoiled the markings of his stomach it would be far better to have him quietly put out of the way here."

The Great Detective reeled and leaned up against the side of the

room. So! The cold-blooded admission of the beautiful woman for the moment took away his breath! Herself the mother of the young Bourbon, misallied with one of the greatest families of Europe, staking her fortune on a Royalist plot, and yet with so instinctive a knowledge of European politics as to know that any removal of the hereditary birth-marks of the Prince would forfeit for him the sympathy of the French populace.

The Countess resumed her tiara.

She left.

The secretary re-entered.

"I have three telegrams from Paris," he said, "they are completely baffling."

He handed over the first telegram.

It read:

"The Prince of Wurttemberg has a long, wet snout, broad ears, very long body, and short hind legs."

The Great Detective looked puzzled.

He read the second telegram.

"The Prince of Wurttemberg is easily recognized by his deep bark."

And then the third.

"The Prince of Wurttemberg can be recognized by the patch of white hair across the centre of his back."

The two men looked at one another. The mystery was maddening, impenetrable.

The Great Detective spoke.

"Give me my domino," he said. "These clues must be followed up," then pausing, while his quick brain analyzed and summed up the evidence before him—"a young man," he muttered, "evidently young since described as a 'pup,' with a long, wet snout (ha! addicted obviously to drinking), a streak of white hair across his back (a first sign of the results of his abandoned life)—yes, yes," he continued, "with this clue I shall find him easily."

The Great Detective rose.

He wrapped himself in a long black cloak with white whiskers and blue spectacles attached.

Completely disguised, he issued forth.

He began the search.

For four days he visited every corner of London.

He entered every saloon in the city. In each of them he drank a glass of rum. In some of them he assumed the disguise of a sailor. In others he entered as a soldier. Into others he penetrated as a clergyman. His disguise was perfect. Nobody paid any attention to him as long as he had the price of a drink.

The search proved fruitless.

Two young men were arrested under suspicion of being the Prince, only to be released.

The identification was incomplete in each case.

One had a long wet snout but no hair on his back.

The other had hair on his back but couldn't bark.

Neither of them was the young Bourbon.

The Great Detective continued his search.

He stopped at nothing.

Secretly, after nightfall, he visited the home of the Prime Minister. He examined it from top to bottom. He measured all the doors and windows. He took up the flooring. He inspected the plumbing. He examined the furniture. He found nothing.

With equal secrecy he penetrated into the palace of the Archbishop. He examined it from top to bottom. Disguised as a choir-boy he took part in the offices of the church. He found nothing.

Still undismayed, the Great Detective made his way into the home of the Countess of Dashleigh. Disguised as a housemaid, he entered the service of the Countess.

Then at last the clue came which gave him a solution of the mystery.

On the wall of the Countess' boudoir was a large framed engraving.

It was a portrait.

Under it was a printed legend:

#### THE PRINCE OF WURTEMBERG

The portrait was that of a Dachshund.

The long body, the broad ears, the unclipped tail, the short hind legs—all was there.

In the fraction of a second the lightning mind of the Great Detective had penetrated the whole mystery.

THE PRINCE WAS A DOG!!!!

Hastily throwing a domino over his housemaid's dress, he rushed to the street. He summoned a passing hansom, and in a few moments was at his house.

"I have it," he gasped to his secretary, "the mystery is solved. I have pieced it together. By sheer analysis I have reasoned it out. Listen—hind legs, hair on back, wet snout, pup—eh, what? does that suggest nothing to you?"

"Nothing," said the secretary; "it seems perfectly hopeless."

The Great Detective, now recovered from his excitement, smiled faintly.

"It means simply this, my dear fellow. The Prince of Wurttemberg is a dog, a prize Dachshund. The Countess of Dashleigh bred him, and he is worth some £25,000 in addition to the prize of £10,000 offered at the Paris dog show. Can you wonder that—"

At that moment the Great Detective was interrupted by the scream of a woman.

"Great Heaven!"

The Countess of Dashleigh dashed into the room.

Her face was wild.

Her tiara was in disorder.

Her pearls were dripping all over the place.

She wrung her hands and moaned.

"They have cut his tail," she gasped, "and taken all the hair off his back. What can I do? I am undone!"

"Madame," said the Great Detective, calm as bronze, "do yourself up. I can save you yet."

"You!"

"Me!"

"How?"

"Listen. This is how. The Prince was to have been shown at Paris."

The Countess nodded.

"Your fortune was staked on him?"

The Countess nodded again.

"The dog was stolen, carried to London, his tail cut and his marks disfigured."

Amazed at the quiet penetration of the Great Detective, the



Countess kept on nodding and nodding.

"And you are ruined?"

"I am," she gasped, and sank down on the floor in a heap of pearls.

"Madame," said the Great Detective, "all is not lost."

He straightened himself up to his full height. A look of unflinchable inflexibility flickered over his features.

The honour of England, the fortune of the most beautiful woman in England was at stake.

"I will do it," he murmured.

"Rise, dear lady," he continued. "Fear nothing. I WILL IMPERSONATE THE DOG!!!"

That night the Great Detective might have been seen on the deck of the Calais packet boat with his secretary. He was on his hands and knees in a long black cloak, and his secretary had him on a short chain.

He barked at the waves exultingly and licked the secretary's hand.

"What a beautiful dog," said the passengers.

The disguise was absolutely complete.

The Great Detective had been coated over with mucilage to which dog hairs had been applied. The markings on his back were perfect. His tail, adjusted with an automatic coupler, moved up and down responsive to every thought. His deep eyes were full of intelligence.

Next day he was exhibited in the Dachshund class at the International show.

He won all hearts.

"*Quel beau chien!*" cried the French people.

"*Ach! was ein Dog!*" cried the Spanish.

The Great Detective took the first prize!

The fortune of the Countess was saved.

Unfortunately as the Great Detective had neglected to pay the dog tax, he was caught and destroyed by the dog-catchers. But that is, of course, quite outside of the present narrative, and is only mentioned as an odd fact in conclusion.

## LIVING WITH MURDER

I AM a great reader of detective fiction. That is, I have been up to now, but I see I shall have to give it up. It begins to affect one's daily life too much. I am always expecting something sudden, something sensational, to happen, such as that a criminal will "burst around the corner" on the run and I shall immediately have to "time" his burst.

They always *time* everything in the stories, so as to have it ready for the evidence.

That is why I now find myself perpetually "timing" myself all day, so that I can swear to everything.

For instance, I went down to dine three or four days ago with my old friend Jimmy Douglas at his house. He lives alone. This, by itself, would make any reader of crime fiction *time* him. I paused a moment at the lighted doorway before ringing the bell and noted that my watch said 7.00 P.M. A street clock just visible down the street, however, marked 7.02½ P.M. Allowing for the fact that my watch was one minute slow, I was thus able to place the time fairly accurately as at 7.01¼.

What did I do that for? Well, don't you see—what if I rang the bell, received no answer, and at length pushed the door open (it would yield quite easily) to find Jimmy Douglas lying prone in the doorway? That would settle the time, wouldn't it? And what if he were still warm (he would be, good fellow)? That would settle just how warm he was.

So I rang the bell. The Chinese servant who answered the door showed me noiselessly into the lighted sitting room and motioned me to sit down. The room was *apparently* empty. I say *apparently*, because in the stories you never know. If Douglas's body was lying hunched up in a corner (you know the way they hunch them up), my business was to take care to look up in the air, around the room, everywhere except in the right place to see him.

I did this and I noticed that there was an Ormolu clock on the mantel (there always is) and that it stood at 7.04 P.M., practically corroborating my previous estimate.

I was just checking it over when Douglas came in.

I noticed his manner at once and could only describe it as extremely normal, even quiet, certainly, I would say, free from any exhilaration. Whether this was a first effect of arsenic poisoning, or just from seeing me, I am not prepared to state.

We had a cocktail. Douglas left two distinct fingerprints on the glass. I held mine by the rim.

We sat down to dinner at 7.30 P.M. Of this I am practically certain because I remember that Douglas said, "Well, it's half-past," and as he said it the Ormolu clock chimed the half-hour. A further corroboration is that the Chinese servant entered at that moment and said, "Half-past seven!" I gather, therefore, that the hour was either seven-thirty or possibly a little before or a little after.

At any rate—not to make too much of details—we sat down to dinner. I noticed that at dinner Douglas took no soup. I attached no importance to this at the time, so as to keep it for afterwards. But I also took care on my part to take no fish. This, of course, in the event of arsenic poison would at least, by elimination, give a certain indication of how the poison had been administered. Up to this point the Chinese servant's manner was quite normal, in fact, Chinese.

I am not able to say whether Douglas took coffee after dinner; I slipped up there. I had got talking, I remember, of my views on Allied Strategy and for the moment forgot not only to time him but to notice what he ate. This makes an unfortunate gap in the record.

However, Douglas, I noticed, seemed but little inclined to talk after dinner. I was still unfolding to him my views on Allied Strategy in the war, but he seemed unable to listen without signs of drowsiness. This obviously might be due to arsenic poisoning.

I left at nine, having noticed that Douglas roused up with a slight start as the Ormolu clock struck, and said, "Nine! I thought . . . I thought it was ten."

I drove home in a taxi; and can easily identify the taxi, even if abandoned in a stone quarry, by a mark I made in the leather. I can identify the taxi man by a peculiar scar.

That, as I say, was three days ago. I open the newspaper every morning with a nervous hand, looking for the finding of Douglas's body. They don't seem to have found it yet. Of course I don't know that he lost it. But then it is never known that a body is lost until some one finds it.

One thing is certain, however. I am all ready if they do. . . . If any news comes out I can act at once. I have the taxi man, and the fingerprints and the Ormolu clock—that's all you need usually.

# STORIES SHORTER STILL

## I

### AN IRREDUCIBLE DETECTIVE STORY

#### HANGED BY A HAIR

#### OR

#### A MURDER MYSTERY MINIMIZED

THE mystery had now reached its climax. First, the man had been undoubtedly murdered. Secondly, it was absolutely certain that no conceivable person had done it.

It was therefore time to call in the great detective.

He gave one searching glance at the corpse. In a moment he whipped out a microscope.

"Ha! ha!" he said, as he picked a hair off the lapel of the dead man's coat. "The mystery is now solved."

He held up the hair.

"Listen," he said, "we have only to find the man who lost this hair and the criminal is in our hands."

The inexorable chain of logic was complete.

The detective set himself to the search.

For four days and nights he moved, unobserved, through the streets of New York scanning closely every face he passed, looking for a man who had lost a hair.

On the fifth day he discovered a man, disguised as a tourist, his head enveloped in a steamer cap that reached below his ears. The man was about to go on board the *Gloritania*.

The detective followed him on board.

"Arrest him!" he said, and then drawing himself to his full height, he brandished aloft the hair.



"This is his," said the great detective. "It proves his guilt."

"Remove his hat," said the ship's captain sternly.

They did so.

The man was entirely bald.

"Ha!" said the great detective, without a moment of hesitation.

"He has committed not *one* murder but about a million."

## II

### A COMPRESSED OLD ENGLISH NOVEL

#### SWEARWORD THE UNPRONOUNCEABLE

#### CHAPTER ONE AND ONLY

"Ods bodikins!" exclaimed Swearword the Saxon, wiping his mailed brow with his iron hand, "a fair morn withal! Methinks twert lithlier to rest me in yon glade than to foray me forth in yon fray! Twert it not?"

But there happened to be a real Anglo-Saxon standing by.

"Where in Heaven's name," he said in sudden passion, "did you get that line of English?"

"Churl!" said Swearword, "it is Anglo-Saxon."

"You're a liar!" shouted the Saxon; "it is not. It is Harvard College, Sophomore Year, Option No. 6."

Swearword, now in like fury, threw aside his hauberk, his baldrick, and his needlework on the grass.

"Lay on!" said Swearword.

"Have at you!" cried the Saxon.

They laid on and had at one another.

Swearword was killed.

Thus luckily the whole story was cut off on the first page and ended.

## III

## A CONDENSED INTERMINABLE NOVEL

FROM THE CRADLE TO THE GRAVE

OR

A THOUSAND PAGES FOR A DOLLAR

NOTE. (*This story originally contained two hundred and fifty thousand words. But by a marvellous feat of condensation it is reduced, without the slightest loss, to a hundred and six words.*)

## I

Edward Endless lived during his youth  
in Maine,  
in New Hampshire,  
in Vermont,  
in Massachusetts,  
in Rhode Island,  
in Connecticut.

## II

Then the lure of the city lured him. His fate took him to

New York, to Chicago, and to Philadelphia.

In Chicago he lived,

in a boarding house on Lasalle Avenue,

then he boarded—

in a living house on Michigan Avenue.

In New York he

had a room in an eating house on Forty-first Street,

and then—

ate in a rooming house on Forty-second Street.

In Philadelphia he

used to sleep on Chestnut Street,

and then—  
slept on Maple Street.

During all this time women were calling to him. He knew and came to be friends with—

Margaret Jones,  
Elizabeth Smith,  
Arabella Thompson,  
Jane Williams,  
Maud Taylor.

And he also got to know, pretty well,  
Louise Quelquechose,  
Antoinette Alphabette,  
and Estelle Etcetera.

And during this same time Art began to call him—  
Pictures began to appeal to him,  
Statues beckoned to him,  
Music maddened him,  
and any form of Recitation or Elocution drove him beside himself.

### III

Then, one day, he married Margaret Jones.  
As soon as he had married her  
he was disillusioned.  
He now hated her.

Then he lived with Elizabeth Smith—  
He had no sooner sat down with her, than—  
He hated her.

Half mad, he took his things over to Arabella Thompson's flat to live with her.

The moment she opened the door of the apartment, he loathed her.

He saw her as she was.

Driven sane with despair, he then—

(Our staff here cut the story off. There are hundreds and hundreds of pages after this. They show Edward Endless grappling in the fight

for clean politics. The last hundred pages deal with religion. Edward finds it after a big fight. But no one reads these pages. There are no women in them. Our staff cut them out and merely show at the end—

Edward Purified—

Uplifted—

Transluted.

The whole story is perhaps the biggest thing ever done on this continent. Perhaps!)

## FISHING AND OTHER MADNESS





## THE OLD, OLD STORY OF HOW FIVE MEN WENT FISHING

THIS is a plain account of a fishing party. It is not a story. There is no plot. Nothing happens in it and nobody is hurt. The only point of this narrative is its peculiar truth. It not only tells what happened to us—the five people concerned in it—but what has happened and is happening to all the other fishing parties that at the season of the year, from Halifax to Idaho, go gliding out on the unruffled surface of our Canadian and American lakes in the still cool of early summer morning.

We decided to go in the early morning because there is a popular belief that the early morning is the right time for bass fishing. The bass is said to bite in the early morning. Perhaps it does. In fact the thing is almost capable of scientific proof. The bass does *not* bite between eight and twelve. It does *not* bite between twelve and six in the afternoon. Nor does it bite between six o'clock and midnight. All these things are known facts. The inference is that the bass bites furiously at about daybreak.

At any rate our party were unanimous about starting early. "Better make an early start," said the Colonel when the idea of the party was suggested. "Oh, yes," said George Popley, the Bank Manager, "we want to get right out on the shoal while the fish are biting."

When he said this all our eyes glistened. Everybody's do. There's a thrill in the words. To "get right out on the shoal at daybreak when the fish are biting," is an idea that goes to any man's brain.

If you listen to the men talking in a Pullman car, or a hotel corridor, or better still, at the little tables in a first-class bar, you will not listen long before you hear one say—"Well, we got out early, just after sunrise, right on the shoal." . . . And presently, even if you can't hear him you will see him reach out his two hands and hold them about two feet apart for the other men to admire. He is

measuring the fish. No, not the fish they caught; this is the big one that they lost. But they had him right up to the top of the water: oh, yes, he was up to the top of the water all right. The number of huge fish that have been heaved up to the top of the water in our lakes is almost incredible. Or at least it used to be when we still had bar rooms and little tables for serving that vile stuff Scotch whisky and such foul things as gin rickeys and John Collinses. It makes one sick to think of it, doesn't it? But there was good fishing in the bars, all winter.

But, as I say, we decided to go early in the morning. Charlie Jones, the railroad man, said that he remembered how when he was a boy, up in Wisconsin, they used to get out at five in the morning—not get up at five but be on the shoal at five. It appears that there is a shoal somewhere in Wisconsin where the bass lie in thousands. Kernin, the lawyer, said that when he was a boy—this was on Lake Rosseau—they used to get out at four. It seems there is a shoal in Lake Rosseau where you can haul up the bass as fast as you can drop your line. The shoal is hard to find—very hard. Kernin can find it, but it is doubtful—so I gather—if any other living man can. The Wisconsin shoal, too, is very difficult to find. Once you find it, you are all right; but it's hard to find. Charlie Jones can find it. If you were in Wisconsin right now he'd take you straight to it, but probably no other person now alive could reach that shoal. In the same way Colonel Morse knows of a shoal in Lake Simcoe where he used to fish years and years ago and which, I understand, he can still find.

I have mentioned that Kernin is a lawyer, and Jones a railroad man and Popley a banker. But I needn't have. Any reader would take it for granted. In any fishing party there is always a lawyer. You can tell him at sight. He is the one of the party that has a landing net and a steel rod in sections with a wheel that is used to wind the fish to the top of the water.

And there is always a banker. You can tell him by his good clothes. Popley, in the bank, wears his banking suit. When he goes fishing he wears his fishing suit. It is much the better of the two, because his banking suit has ink marks on it, and his fishing suit has no fish marks on it.

As for the Railroad Man—quite so, the reader knows it as well

as I do—you can tell him because he carries a pole that he cut in the bush himself, with a ten cent line wrapped round the end of it. Jones says he can catch as many fish with this kind of line as Kernin can with his patent rod and wheel. So he can, too. Just the same number.

But Kernin says that with his patent apparatus if you get a fish on you can *play* him. Jones says to Hades with *playing* him: give him a fish on his line and he'll haul him in all right. Kernin says he'd lose him. But Jones says *he* wouldn't. In fact he *guarantees* to haul the fish in. Kernin says that more than once (in Lake Rosseau) he has played a fish for over half an hour. I forget now why he stopped; I think the fish quit playing.

I have heard Kernin and Jones argue this question of their two rods, as to which rod can best pull in the fish, for half an hour. Others may have heard the same question debated. I know no way by which it could be settled.

Our arrangement to go fishing was made at the little golf club of our summer town on the verandah where we sit in the evening. Oh, it's just a little place, nothing pretentious: the links are not much good for *golf*; in fact we don't play much *golf* there, so far as golf goes, and of course, we don't serve meals at the club, it's not like that—and no, we've nothing to drink there because of prohibition. But we go and *sit* there. It's a good place to *sit*, and, after all, what else can you do in the present state of the law?

So it was there that we arranged the party.

The thing somehow seemed to fall into the mood of each of us. Jones said he had been hoping that some of the boys would get up a fishing party. It was apparently the one kind of pleasure that he really cared for. For myself I was delighted to get in with a crowd of regular fishermen like these four, especially as I hadn't been out fishing for nearly ten years: though fishing is a thing I am passionately fond of. I know no pleasure in life like the sensation of getting a four pound bass on the hook and hauling him up to the top of the water, to weigh him. But, as I say, I hadn't been out for ten years: oh, yes, I live right beside the water every summer, and yes, certainly—I am saying so—I am passionately fond of fishing, but still somehow I hadn't been *out*. Every fisherman knows just how that happens. The years have a way of slipping by. Yet I must say I was

surprised to find that so keen a sport as Jones hadn't been out—so it presently appeared—for eight years. I had imagined he practically lived on the water. And Colonel Morse and Kernin—I was amazed to find—hadn't been out for twelve years, not since the day (so it came out in conversation) when they went out together in Lake Rosseau and Kernin landed a perfect monster, a regular corker, five pounds and a half, they said: or no, I don't think he *landed* him. No, I remember he didn't *land* him. He caught him—and he *could* have landed him—he should have landed him—but he *didn't* land him. That was it. Yes, I remember Kernin and Morse had a slight discussion about it—oh, perfectly amicable—as to whether Morse had fumbled with the net—or whether Kernin—the whole argument was perfectly friendly—had made an ass of himself by not “striking” soon enough. Of course the whole thing was so long ago that both of them could look back on it without any bitterness or ill nature. In fact it amused them. Kernin said it was the most laughable thing he ever saw in his life to see poor old Jack (that's Morse's name) shoving away with the landing net wrong side up. And Morse said he'd never forget seeing poor old Kernin yanking his line first this way and then that and not knowing where to try to haul it. It made him laugh to look back at it.

They might have gone on laughing for quite a time but Charlie Jones interrupted by saying that in his opinion a landing net is a piece of darned foolishness. Here Popley agrees with him. Kernin objects that if you don't use a net you'll lose your fish at the side of the boat. Jones says no: give him a hook well through the fish and a stout line in his hand and that fish has *got* to come in. Popley says so too. He says let him have his hook fast through the fish's head with a short stout line, and put him (Popley) at the other end of that line and that fish will come in. It's *got* to. Otherwise Popley will know why. That's the alternative. Either the fish must come in or Popley must know why. There's no escape from the logic of it.

But perhaps some of my readers have heard the thing discussed before.

So as I say we decided to go the next morning and to make an early start. All of the boys were at one about that. When I say “boys,” I use the word, as it is used in fishing, to mean people from



say forty-five to sixty-five. There is something about fishing that keeps men young. If a fellow gets out for a good morning's fishing, forgetting all business worries, once in a while—say once in ten years—it keeps him fresh.

We agree to go in a launch, a large launch—to be exact, the largest in the town. We could have gone in row boats, but a row boat is a poor thing to fish from. Kernin said that in a row boat it is impossible properly to “*play*” your fish. The side of the boat is so low that the fish is apt to leap over the side into the boat when half “*played*.” Popley said that there is no *comfort* in a row boat. In a launch a man can reach out his feet, and take it easy. Charlie Jones said that in a launch a man could rest his back against something and Morse said that in a launch a man could rest his neck. Young inexperienced boys, in the small sense of the word, never think of these things. So they go out and after a few hours their necks get tired; whereas a group of expert fishers in a launch can rest their backs and necks and even fall asleep during the pauses when the fish stop biting.

Anyway all the “boys” agreed that the great advantage of a launch would be that we could get a *man* to take us. By that means the man could see to getting the worms, and the man would be sure to have spare lines, and the man would come along to our different places—we were all beside the water—and pick us up. In fact the more we thought about the advantage of having a “man” to take us the better we liked it. As a boy gets old he likes to have a man around to do the work.

Anyway Frank Rolls, the man we decided to get, not only has the biggest launch in town, but what is more, Frank *knows* the lake. We called him up at his boat house over the phone and said we’d give him five dollars to take us out first thing in the morning provided that he knew the shoal. He said he knew it.

I don’t know, to be quite candid about it, who mentioned whisky first. In these days everybody has to be a little careful. I imagine we had all been *thinking* whisky for some time before anybody said it. But there is a sort of convention that when men go fishing they must have whisky. Each man makes the pretence that the one thing he needs at six o’clock in the morning is cold raw whisky. It is spoken

of in terms of affection. One man says the first thing you need if you're going fishing is a good "snort" of whisky: another says that a good "snifter" is the very thing and the others agree, that no man can fish properly without "a horn," or a "bracer" or an "eye-opener." Each man really decides that he himself won't take any. But he feels that in a collective sense, the "boys" need it.

So it was with us. The Colonel said he'd bring along "a bottle of booze." Popley said, no, let *him* bring it; Kernin said let him; and Charlie Jones said no, he'd bring it. It turned out that the Colonel had some very good Scotch at his house that he'd like to bring: oddly enough Popley had some good Scotch in *his* house too; and, queer though it is, each of the boys had Scotch in his house. When the discussion closed we knew that each of the five of us was intending to bring a bottle of whisky. Each of the five of us expected the others to drink one and a quarter bottles in the course of the morning.

I suppose we must have talked on that verandah till long after one in the morning. It was probably nearer two than one when we broke up. But we agreed that that made no difference. Popley said that for him three hours' sleep, the right kind of sleep, was far more refreshing than ten. Kernin said that a lawyer learns to snatch his sleep when he can, and Jones said that in railroad work a man pretty well cuts out sleep.

So we had no alarms whatever about not being ready by five. Our plan was simplicity itself. Men like ourselves in responsible positions learn to organize things easily. In fact Popley says it is that faculty that has put us where we are. So the plan simply was that Frank Rolls should come along at five o'clock and blow his whistle in front of our places, and at that signal each man would come down to his wharf with his rod and kit and so we'd be off to the shoal without a moment's delay.

The weather we ruled out. It was decided that even if it rained that made no difference. Kernin said that fish bite better in the rain. And everybody agreed that a man with a couple of snorts in him need have no fear of a little rain water.

So we parted, all keen on the enterprise. Nor do I think even now that there was anything faulty or imperfect in that party as we planned it.

I heard Frank Rolls blowing his infernal whistle opposite my summer cottage at some ghastly hour in the morning. Even without getting out of bed, I could see from the window that it was no day for fishing. No, not raining exactly. I don't mean that, but one of those peculiar days—I don't mean *wind*—there was no wind, but a sort of feeling in the air that showed anybody who understands bass fishing that it was a perfectly rotten day for going out. The fish, I seemed to know it, wouldn't bite.

When I was still fretting over the annoyance of the disappointment I heard Frank Rolls blowing his whistle in front of the other cottages. I counted thirty whistles altogether. Then I fell into a light doze—not exactly sleep, but a sort of *doze*—I can find no other word for it. It was clear to me that the other “boys” had thrown the thing over. There was no use in my trying to go out alone. I stayed where I was, my doze lasting till ten o'clock.

When I walked up town later in the morning I couldn't help being struck by the signs in the butchers' shops and the restaurants, FISH, FRESH FISH, FRESH LAKE FISH.

Where in blazes do they get those fish anyway?

## CRICKET FOR AMERICANS

AT the present hour all of us who are British are anxious to cultivate cordial relations with the United States. It has occurred to me that something could be done here with cricket. Americans, I fear, do not understand our national British game, and lack sympathy with it. I remember a few years ago attending a county match in England with an American friend, and I said to him at noon on Wednesday (the match had begun on Monday), "I'm afraid that if it keeps on raining they'll have to draw stumps." "Draw what?" he said. "Draw out the wickets," I answered, "and call the game ended." "Thank God," he answered. Yet this was a really big game, a county match—Notts against Hants, I think, but perhaps Bucks against Yorks. Anyway it was a tense, exciting game, Notts (or Bucks) with 600 runs leading by 350, four wickets down, and only another six hours to play.

Ever since that day I meant to try to put the game in a better light, and then people in America could understand how wonderful it is.

Perhaps I should explain that, all modesty apart, when I speak of cricket I speak of what I know. I played cricket for years and years. I still have a bat. Once, as I mentioned in an earlier section of this book, I played in an All-Canada match at Ottawa before the Governor-General. I went in first in the first innings, and was bowled out by the first ball; but in the second innings I went in last, and by "playing back" quickly on the first ball I knocked down the wickets before the ball could reach them. Lord Minto told me afterwards that he had never seen batting like mine before, except perhaps in India, where the natives are notoriously quick.

Let me begin with a few simple explanations. Cricket is played with eleven on a side, provided you can get eleven. It isn't always easy to get a cricket team and sometimes you have to be content with ten or nine or even less. This difficulty of getting men for a



side really arises from the fact that cricketers are not paid to play. They wouldn't take it, or rather they do take it when they can get it, but then they are professionals. This makes a distinction in English cricket as between players and gentlemen, although, as a matter of fact, a great many gentlemen are first-class players, and nowadays, at any rate, a good many of the players are gentlemen, and, contrawise, quite a number of the gentlemen are not quite what you would call gentlemen. I'm afraid I haven't brought out the distinction very clearly. Perhaps I may add that when we play cricket in Canada there is no question of gentlemen.

So, as I say, although cricket is properly played with eleven on a side, it is often difficult to get enough. You have to be content with what you can bring, and pick up one or two others when you get there. When I played in the All-Canada game at Ottawa, we had nine at the start, but we got one more in the hotel and one in the barber-shop. When the All-England team goes to Australia they easily get eleven men, because that is different. That's twelve thousand miles. But when it's only from one town to the next it's hard to get more than seven or eight.

But let me explain the game. Cricket is played by bowling a ball up and down a "pitch" of 22 yards (roughly 66 feet, approximately) at each end of which are set three upright sticks called wickets. A batsman stands just in front of each set of wickets, a little at the side, and with his bat stops the ball from hitting the wickets. If the ball hits the wickets he is out, but otherwise not. Thus if he begins on Monday and his wickets are not hit on Monday he begins again on Tuesday; and so on; play stops all Sunday.

Of course, when you are looking on at a cricket match, you are not supposed to shout and yell the way we do over baseball on our side of the water in Canada and in the States. All you do is to say every now and then, "Oh, very pretty, sir, very pretty!" You are speaking to the batsman, who is about two hundred yards away and can't hear you. But that doesn't matter; you keep right on: "Oh, well done, sir, well done." . . . That day of the county match in England that I spoke of, my American friend heard an Englishman on the other side of him say, "Oh, very pretty! Very pretty, sir," and he asked the Englishman what was very pretty. But of course the Englishman had no way of telling him. He didn't know him.



So my friend turned to me and asked, "What did he do?" And I explained that it wasn't what he did, it was what he didn't do.

A great many things in good cricket turn on that—what you don't do. You let the ball go past you, for instance, instead of hitting it, and the experts say, "Oh, well let alone, sir." There are lots more balls coming; you've three days to wait for one. In the game of which I speak, the really superb piece of play was this: the bowler sent a fast ball through the air right straight towards the batsman's face; he moved his face aside and let it pass, and they called, "Well let alone, sir." You see, if it had hit him on the side of his face, he'd have been out. How out? Why, by what is called L. B. W. I forget what the letters exactly stand for, but we use them just as in the States you use things like P. W. A., A. A. C., and S. S. E. and R. I. P. You know what they are about, though you can't remember what they stand for. Well, L. B. W. is a way of getting out in cricket. It means that if you stand in front of the ball and it hits you—not your bat, but you—you are out. Suppose, for instance, you deliberately turn your back on the ball and it rises up and hits you right behind in the middle of your body—out! L. B. W.

There was a terrible row over this a few years ago in connection with one of the great Test Matches between England and Australia. These, of course, are the great events, the big things every year in the cricket world. An All-England team goes out once a year to play Test Matches in Australia, and an All-Australian team comes to England once a year for Test Matches. As soon as they know which is really best, they can have a real match. Meantime they keep testing it out. Well, a few years ago the Australians started the idea of bowling the ball terribly fast, and right straight at the batsman, not at the wickets, so as to hit him on purpose. Even if he started to run away from the wickets they'd get him, even if he was halfway to the home tent. I didn't see it myself, but I understand that was the idea of it. So there was a tremendous row about it, and bad feeling, with talk of Australia leaving the British Empire. However, outsiders intervened and it was suggested (the Archbishop of Canterbury, I think) that the rule should be that if the bowler meant to hit the man to put him out, then he wasn't out, but that if he didn't mean to hit and he hit him, then he was out. Naturally the bowler had to be put on his honour whether he meant it. But that didn't

bother the Australians; they were willing to go on their honour. They're used to it. In fact the English agreed too, that when they got the ball in their turn they'd go on their honour in throwing it at an Australian.

That, of course, is the nice thing about cricket—the spirit of it, the sense of honour. When we talk of cricket we always say that such a thing “isn't cricket,” meaning that it's not a thing you would do. You could, of course. There'd be nothing to stop you, except that, you see, you couldn't. At a cricket game, for example, you never steal any of the other fellows' things out of the marquee tent where you come and go. You ask why not? Well, simply that it “isn't cricket.” Or take an example in the field and you'll understand it better. Let me quote with a little more detail the case to which I referred earlier in the book. We'll say that you're fielding at “square leg.” That means that you are fielding straight behind the batter's back and only about twenty-five feet away from him. Well, suppose you happen to be day-dreaming a little—cricket is a dreamy game—and the batter happens to swing round hard on a passing ball and pastes it right into the middle of your stomach. As soon as you are able to speak you are supposed to call to the bowler, “Awfully sorry, old man”; not sorry you got hit in the stomach, sorry you missed the chance he gave you; because from the bowler's point of view you had a great opportunity, when you got hit in the stomach, of holding the ball against your stomach—which puts the batter out.

So you see when you play cricket there comes in all the time this delicate idea of the cricket spirit. A good deal of English government is carried on this way. You remember a few years ago the case of a very popular Prime Minister who used to come to the House—that means the House of Commons—and say, “I'm afraid, gentlemen, I've made another mess again with this business of Italy and Ethiopia; damned if I can keep track of them; that's the third mess I've made this year.” And the House wouldn't vote him out of office. It wouldn't have been cricket. Instead, they went wild with applause because the Prime Minister had shown the true cricket spirit by acknowledging that he was beaten, though of course he didn't know when he had been licked. And, for the matter of that, he'd come all the way down from Scotland just for the purpose at the very height of the grouse season—or the fly season—anyway, one of those

insect seasons that keep starting in Scotland when the heather is bright with the gillies all out full.

Looking back over what I have written above, I am afraid I may have given a wrong impression here and there. When I implied that the two batsmen stand at the wicket and stop the ball, I forgot to say that every now and then they get impatient, or indignant, and not only stop it but hit it. And do they hit it! A cricket ball is half as heavy again as a baseball and travels farther. I've seen Don Bradman, the Australian, playing on our McGill University grounds, knock the ball clean over the stadium and then over the top of the trees on the side of Mount Royal, and from there on. They had to stop the game and drink shandygaff while they sent a boy to get the ball. They almost thought of getting a new one.

And when I talked of hitting a cricketer in the stomach with the ball I forgot to explain how awfully difficult it is to do it. Not that they've no stomach—no, indeed, plenty!—you don't train *down* for cricket, you fill *up*. But the point is that the cricketer will catch any kind of ball before you can hit him. And can they catch! You'll see a fellow playing cover-point—that's northeast half a point east from the bat, distance twenty yards—and a ball is driven hard and fast above his head, and he'll leap in the air with one hand up, and, *while still in the air*, leap up a little farther still, and smack! goes the ball into his one hand. Can you wonder that the spectators all murmur, "Oh, very pretty, sir"?

And in point of excitement you think cricket slow, but can't you see how the excitement slowly gathers and all piles up at the end? Two totals coming closer and closer together—fifty to tie, fifty-one to win, twenty to tie, twenty-one to win—then three to tie, four to win—one smashing hit will do it now! Ah, there she goes!—high above the pavilion, a boundary hit for four! "Oh, very nice, sir, very nice!"

Oh, yes, cricket's all right. Let's have a shandygaff.

## MY FISHING POND

*(I told this story so often and so successfully as a story that at last I went and told it to the Editor of the Atlantic Monthly, and he told it to all the world. But there is no harm in retelling it here.)*

IT lies embowered in a little cup of the hills, my fishing pond. I made a last trip to it, just as the season ended, when the autumn leaves of its great trees were turning colour and rustling down to rest upon the still black water. So steep are the banks, so old and high the trees, that scarcely a puff of wind ever ruffles the surface of the pond. All around it, it is as if the world was stilled into silence, and time blended into eternity.

I realized again as I looked at the pond what a beautiful, secluded spot it was, how natural its appeal to the heart of the angler. You turn off a country road, go sideways across a meadow and over a hill and there it lies—a sheet of still water, with high, high banks, grown with great trees. Long years ago some one built a sawmill, all gone now, at the foot of the valley and threw back the water to make a pond, perhaps a quarter of a mile long. At the widest it must be nearly two hundred feet—the most skilful fisherman may make a full cast both ways. At the top end, where it runs narrow among stumps and rushes, there is no room to cast except with direction and great skill.

Let me say at once, so as to keep no mystery about it, that there are no fish in my pond. So far as I know there never have been. But I have never found that to make any difference. Certainly none to the men I bring here—my chance visitors from the outside world—for an afternoon of casting. If there are no fish in the pond, at least they never know it. They never doubt it; they never ask; and I let it go at that.

It is well known hereabouts that I do not take anybody and everybody out to my fish pond. I only care to invite people who can really



fish, who can cast a line—experts, and especially people from a distance to whom the whole neighbourhood is new and attractive, the pond seen for the first time. If I took out ordinary men, especially men near home, they would very likely notice that they got no fish. The expert doesn't. He knows trout fishing too well. He knows that, even in a really fine pond, such as he sees mine is, there are days when not a trout will rise. He'll explain it to you himself, and, having explained it, he is all the better pleased if he turns out to be right and they don't rise. Trout, as everyone knows who is an angler, never rise after a rain, nor before one; it is impossible to get them to rise in the heat, and any chill in the air keeps them down. The absolutely right day is a still, cloudy day, but even then there are certain kinds of clouds that prevent a rising of the trout. Indeed I have only to say to one of my expert friends, "Queer, they didn't bite!" and he's off to a good start with an explanation. There is such a tremendous lot to know about trout fishing that men who are keen on it can discuss theories of fishing by the hour.

Such theories we generally talk over—my guest of the occasion and I—as we make our preparations at the pond. You see I keep there all the apparatus that goes with fishing—a punt, with lockers in the sides of it—a neat little dock built out of cedar (Cedar attracts the trout.) and best of all a little shelter house, a quaint little place like a pagoda, close beside the water and yet under the trees. Inside is tackle, all sorts of tackle, hanging round the walls in a mixture of carelessness and order.

"Look, old man," I say, "if you like to try a running pater noster, take this one." Or, "Have you ever seen these Japanese leads? No, they're not a gut, they're a sort of floss."

"I doubt if I can land one with that," he says.

"Perhaps not," I answer. In fact I'm sure he couldn't; there isn't any to land.

On pegs in the pagoda hangs a waterproof mackintosh or two—for you never know—you may be caught in a shower just when the trout are starting to rise. With that of course a sort of cellarette cupboard with decanters and bottles and ginger snaps and perhaps an odd pot of anchovy paste—no one wants to quit fishing for mere hunger. Nor does any real angler care to begin fishing without taking just a drop ("Just a touch; be careful; wo! wo!") of something to



keep out the cold, or to wish good luck for the chances of the day.

I always find, when I bring out one of my friends, that these mere preparatives or preparations, these preliminaries of angling, are the best part of it. Often they take half an hour. There is so much to discuss—the question of weights of tackle, the colour of the fly to use and broad general questions of theory such as whether it matters what kind of a hat a man wears. It seems that trout will rise for some hats and for others not. One of my best guests, who has written a whole book on fly fishing, is particularly strong on hats and colour.

"I don't think I'd wear that hat, old man," he says; "much too dark for a day like this."

"I wore it all last month," I said.

"So you might, old man, but that was August. I wouldn't wear a dark one in September, and that tie is too dark a blue, old man."

So I knew that that made it all right. I kept the hat on. We had a grand afternoon; we got no fish.

I admit that the lack of fish in my pond requires sometimes a little tact in management. The guest gets a little restless. So I say to him, "You certainly have the knack of casting!" and he gets so absorbed in casting further and further that he forgets the fish. Or I take him towards the upper end and he gets his line caught on bulrushes—that might be a bite. Or if he still keeps restless, I say suddenly: "Hush! Was that a fish jumped?" That will silence any true angler instantly. "You stand in the bow," I whisper, "and I'll gently paddle in that direction." It's the *whispering* that does it. We are still a hundred yards away from any trout that could hear us, even if a trout was there. But that makes no difference. Some of the men I take out begin to whisper a mile away from the pond and come home whispering.

You see, after all, what with frogs jumping, and catching the line in bulrushes, or pulling up a water-logged chip nearly to the top, they don't really know—my guests don't—whether they have hooked something or not. Indeed after a little lapse of time they think they did; they talk of the "big one I lost"—a thing over which any angler gets sentimental in retrospect. "Do you remember," they say to me months later at our club in the city, "that big trout I lost up on your fish pond last summer!"

"Indeed I do," I say.

"Did you ever get him later on?"

"No, never," I answer. In fact I'm darned sure I didn't; neither him nor any other.

Yet the illusion holds good. And besides you never can tell. There *might* be trout in the pond. Why not? After all, why shouldn't there be a trout in the pond? You take a pond like that and there ought to be trout in it!

Whenever the sight of the pond bursts on the eyes of a new guest he stands entranced. "What a wonderful place for trout!" he exclaims.

"Isn't it?" I answer.

"No wonder you'd get trout in a pond like that."

"No wonder at all."

"You don't need to stock it at all, I suppose?"

"Stock it!" I laugh at the idea! Stock a pond like that! Well, I guess not.

Perhaps one of the best and most alluring touches is fishing out of season—just a day or two after the season has closed. Any fisherman knows how keen is the regret at each expiring term—swallowed up and lost in the glory of the fading autumn. So if a guest turns up just then I say, "I know it's out of season, but I thought you might care to take a run out to the pond anyway and have a look at it." He can't resist. By the time he's in the pagoda and has a couple of small drinks ("Careful, not too much; wo! wo!") he decides there can be no harm in making a cast or two.

"I suppose," he says, "you never have any trouble with the inspectors?"

"Oh, no," I answer, "they never think of troubling me!" And with that we settle down to an afternoon of it.

"I'm glad," says the guest at the end, "that they weren't rising. After all we had just the same fun as if they were."

That's it—illusion! How much of life is like that. It's the *idea* of the thing that counts, not the reality. You don't need fish for fishing, any more than you need partridge for partridge shooting, or gold for gold mining . . . just the illusion or expectation.

So I am going back now to the city and to my club, where we

shall fish all winter, hooking up the big ones, but losing the ones bigger still, hooking two trout at one throw—three at a throw!—and for me behind it all the memory of my fishing pond darkening under the falling leaves. . . . At least it has made my friends happy.

## MY LADDERS

### A SEQUEL TO MY FISHING POND

Indulgent readers of the *Atlantic Monthly* will recall the fact that in that esteemed periodical a year ago, I wrote an account of My Fishing Pond. I described the beautiful little secluded spot in a woodland hollow in which it lay. I caught, I think, in words something of the autumn glory that fell on it with the falling leaves. I admitted, quite frankly, that as far as I knew there were no fish in it. But that, I explained, I kept to myself; it made no difference to the expert fishermen, my friends who came on a casual visit to cast a fly at my trout. They were all impressed with the wonderful surroundings, had never seen a trout pond of greater promise, and easily explained, over a friendly drink in my pagoda, the failure of a single day.

I realize now that I never should have published this in the *Atlantic*. The Editor and I must have offended some tributary god of fishing. Nemesis fell upon me. When the winter broke and the ice went, a great flood of water carried away the dam, and flung it, cement, logs and all, in a wild confusion of debris down the stream. There it lies now, and above it the pond, drained out flat to a bottom of wet weeds and old logs and stranded puddles—a feeble stream trickling through.

And the trout? Gone! washed clean away down the stream! I take my friends out now to the place and they explain it all to me until I can see it like a vision—the beautiful trout hurled away in spring flood and foam! My friends estimate them as anything from two miles of trout to five miles. But do you think those fishermen have lost interest? Not a bit! They are more keen on coming out to look at my pond and give advice about it than they were even in the days when we used, as they recall it, to haul out trout by the puntful.

They explain to me what to do. The miller who ran a little feed mill off the pond is going to rebuild the dam, and my friends tell me to put in "ladders" and the trout will all come back! A trout, it seems, will climb a ladder! I can hardly believe it, but they all tell me that; in fact I have learned to say nothing, just to look utterly disconsolate till the visiting expert says, "Have you thought of ladders?" And then I act the part of a man rescued from despair. They say it will take about three ladders of five feet each. How trout climb a ladder I don't know; it must be difficult for them to get hold of the rungs. But a man said in Scotland he has seen a trout climb 20 feet. It appears that if you go out in the autumn you can lie on the bank of the dam and watch the trout, splashing and climbing in the foam. Quite a lot of my friends are coming up here next autumn just to see them climb. And even if it is out of season, they may throw a hook at them!

Fishermen, in other words, are just unbeatable. Cut them off from fish, and they are just as happy over "ladders." So we sit now in my little pagoda, and someone says: "Talking about ladders, I must tell you—whoa! whoa! not too big a one." . . . And away we go, floating off on the Ladders of Imagination.

## WHEN FELLERS GO FISHING

IF I were writing this discussion as a scientific essay, I should put as the title, *The Reaction of Fishing upon the Psychology of the Individual*. That would guarantee that no one would read it. But if I label it as above, "*When Fellers Go Fishing*," that enlists the sympathy of everybody, at least that is, of everybody who matters—all the people who go fishing.

From time immemorial, fishing has had this peculiar, sympathetic claim. King James spoke of fishing as "the apostles' own calling." And long before King James, in the earliest twilight of our literature, in all old tales and legends, a fisherman was supposed to be a kindly fellow, poor but likeable, whereas a merchant was a cheat, and a lawyer, when he presently appeared, stood for a crook. It was always a poor fisherman who found an emerald in the belly of a fish, a poor fisherman to whom a Saint appeared, or a poor fisherman who saved a little drowning maiden who turned out to be a princess. Think what a thrill of interest Charles Kingsley gives us in his famous poem that begins, "Three fishers went sailing, out into the west." But suppose he had said, "Three lawyers took the train to the east." Not the same at all. Even now, when the writer of a crime story wants to indicate that one of the characters concerned must be all right at heart, he describes him as "passionately fond of angling." It is to be observed that "angling" is the name given to fishing by people who can't fish.

Now here is why fishing has this peculiar appeal. In the far-away past, fishing played a far larger part in human life, inconceivably larger, than it does now. It outdates agriculture by centuries. All of the people from whom we descend lived beside and on the waters. In each of us is buried, thirty generations down, the soul of a by-gone fisherman. And our city office men, when you take them away from their desks and get them out with the sound of the waves and the song of the wind in their ears, turn back again into fishermen.



"I've never been out fishing before," says such a one as the motor boat bears him out on the lake, the tackle and gear all stowed and ready for the day's work. What, never before? Yet look at the queer far-away look that comes into his eye, turning to the horizon, seeking back unconsciously the lost memories of a thousand years ago. What, never before? Why, have you forgotten how you and I went fishing off the coast of what we now call Norway, in the days of Hengist and Horsa? That's what you're listening for, my dear sir, the sound of the waves beating on the broken shoals among which our great boat with its single sail is driving. Sounds like these still echo in the ears of infant children, before the age of speech and conscious memory. The child that stirs and murmurs in its sleep is hearing the waves of the North Sea, and calling to you to pull hard on the steering oar, to keep the boat from the breakers.

Mere fancy this? Imagination? Not at all, plain scientific fact. Ask any biologist and he'll tell you that it's plain truth, only he'll use such a maze of scientific terms that he'll take all the simple meaning out of it. He'll admit that the "ichthyological impulse is part of our Mendelian heritage"—then he will pause and correct his statements by saying that perhaps "piscatorial urge" would be a better term than "ichthyological impulse." So you can have your choice. What he really means is that every man, deep down, is a fisherman.

So when people go out fishing, or are taken out fishing, this "piscatorial urge" gets hold of them. You know what is meant by "atavism," by "throwing back" to the characters of far-away ancestors. Well, that is what they get. The transformation is best seen—and this is in accordance with scientific law—is best seen in the case of beginners, of people doing a thing for the first time with only instinct to guide them. Observe this man whom you have asked out for a day's fishing—what did you say he was by profession? A stock-broker. Oh, yes—! well, he's looking through his clothes cupboard for a suit to wear out fishing. Don't interrupt him, don't disturb him. He knows better than you what he wants. He's looking for that old suit of tanned leather that he wore in the North Sea, a thousand years ago. Hush, let him look—there! He's found it. I admit that what you see, or think you see, is the old pair of ginger-brown pants that the tailor cut too big by accident and that his wife has tried to throw away a dozen times already—but what *he* sees is a suit of

seal-hide that he wore when his name was Lief Hellslinger, and he smashed through the foam off the Faroe Islands.

That is why when you take men out fishing they turn up in such queer costumes. Here's one with a red coat on and a red knotted band round his waist—old junk from his snow-shoeing days very likely—but to him it's the stuff he wore as a Carthaginian fisherman off the coast of Tunis in the days of Hannibal. See the feller with the huge rubber boots (a plumber left them in his cellar); he wears those, though he doesn't know it, so that an octopus can't bite him.

This is the deep hidden reason why a party of "fishermen" always look so queer. The stores try to make these things but they can't. Patent rubber jackets and Norfolk coats with side flap pockets, and pancake waterproof hats—oh, no! you can spend a couple of hundred dollars on this stuff and all you look like is an American millionaire who has rented a Scottish salmon stream—you've seen him in pictures a hundred times. Beside him, by the way, is a Scottish "gillie"—the real thing—with clothes that go back to the Picts and Scots of the Emperor Hadrian's time.

As with the transformation of clothes, so with the transformation of character. It seems to me that men out fishing take on, as it were, a new character, or at least resurrect one buried long ago and lost under the surface of daily life. I spoke a moment ago of the transformation of my friends when out fishing—bass fishing for example—in a motor boat on one of our lakes where they turn back into Saxons of the North Sea. But take the same men out fishing on a river stream "out in the bush" nicely out of the beaten path of highways and civilized meals, and they'll turn back further still. They'll go clear back to the ancient Britons in the woods—suddenly become ingenious, subtle, silent, full of wood-craft. When you see such a man go into the bush you realize that it is a pity he ever came out of it. Watch him squatting beside the fire that he is managing to make burn out of wet twigs in a drizzling rain. The ground is sodden. Does he know it? The smoke puffs in his eyes. Does he feel it? No, of course not—this man is clean back to the days of Boadicea; after three days in the bush he'll tan as dark as an Iberian Celt; he'll be stained with woad (from his cigarettes) and he'll eat a pound and a half of meat at a sitting, and be out at sunrise, fishing in the foam below a fall. Stand it? Why, he can stand anything! Yet, this

is the same man that last week was breakfasting on half a grape-fruit with bromo-seltzer, who sent the waiter to tell the head waiter to tell the management of the hotel that the room was chilly, and who could quarrel and get angry over a trifle, or a misstatement, a contradiction, that out fishing he couldn't hear and wouldn't notice if he did.

Quarrels, arguments!—no, that's another thing about fishing. There's no room, no time for that. A little genial discussion, if you will, as to whether a gut leader on a bass line is any good, or no damn good. That's all right, that's science. But to think of quarreling over the things men argue about in ordinary life—such as whether Sir John A. Macdonald died in 1891 or 1892: whether John L. Sullivan was born in Ireland, and whether the Scott Act came first, or Local Option!

Oh, no, a man fishing is too broad-minded to dispute over these things. What does that matter? And anyway you can't hear what the other fellow is saying for the noise of the fall. Look, Ed's got another over there. "Attaboy, Ed! only darn it, he can't hear."

. . . . .

But remember—just one last caution. After you have been out with a "bunch" of darned good fellows for four days on the Maganetawan, or in the bush country north of Lake Nipigon—don't—no, very particularly don't—ask that group of men to come and all dine together at your club in the city on their return. If you do, you'll find that the magic has all gone! There they are!—not a bunch, but a group—back in their little Tuxedo jackets, shaved each as pink as a dressed hog, precise, formal—and eating like sick hens pecking damaged grain. The magic is all gone! The enchantment has vanished, as enchantment always does, vanished and gone over night. The North Sea, and the Carthaginians and the Britons squatting beside the smoky fire—oh, no, those are not these men. . . . Maid, will you tell the steward, we've been waiting five minutes already for our coffee!

## THE FAMILIAR MAGIC OF FISHING

THEY sat together in the smokers' end of a Pullman car. They didn't know one another. They were strangers. They weren't talking to one another—why talk anyway? A man always feels tough and only half alive in the morning on a Pullman car—no need to make conversation with the damn fool, so thought each of them.

Outside, the February snow blew against the windows. One saw dim outlines of trees, mostly spruce. "Where are we?" said one of the men. He said it half by accident. He hadn't spoken for an hour.

"Just at the end of the bush country," the other man answered. "That's Washago Junction. I recognize it by that piece of bush."

"You know this country?" said the first man.

"Oh, yes, I come up here fishing all the time."

"Is that so? ARE THERE FISH HERE?"

"Trout."

"Trout, eh?" said the second man, trying to get his face close to the pane so as to see the trout. "There are trout streams here?"

He spoke almost reverently, as if in a church.

"Oh, yes, lots of them, all through here. There are some little lakes further in, but here it's mostly streams."

"You fish with flies?"

"Well, you can all right where it's a little open but of course there's a lot of it where the bush is so thick that you can't get room to cast. I don't mind admitting it, when I can't get room to cast, I'll fish with bait every time, with worms."

"I'll say so!" said the other man. "And mind you, there's a whole lot more skill in fishing with worms than people think. You get a place where the stream takes a sharp turn right under a big log in the water—say, for instance, there was a log over there—" He pointed at the other side of the little room—

"Yes," said the listener. He could see the log too. Being fishermen, it was very clearly right there for both of them.



"—now, we'll say it's all thick brush—"

"Yes," assented the other man; in fact he could feel the brush all round him. He couldn't have moved his arm if he'd tried.

"—now, you see, you get your line on the bottom—there's apt to be a little bit of hard sand or gravel, in a place like this right in the middle of the channel—and you reach out your line—"

The speaker sat forward in his chair till he was—or thought he was—on his hands and knees. The other man bent his back a little—(the brush wouldn't let him bend much), and they were *both* on their hands and knees.

"—you get a good bait on your hook, the bigger the better, it travels easier and won't catch, and you let it just—roll—roll—along with the water. . . ."

There was tense excitement in the little room. Both men followed breathlessly the rolling line. . . . "You'll never get snagged," the speaker continued, talking low, as trout are easily frightened, "if you let the line take its own way. It'll go into the deepest hole—and then, by George! you feel Mr. Trout take a snap at it, and out he comes!"

He landed the trout right on the floor of the room, a perfect beauty with white-edged fins, and bright vermilion spots on the deep, firm-fleshed sides.

And with that the two men went on to discuss telescope rods and whether the damn things really work, or whether one wouldn't rather have a bamboo rod in little sections—you can put it all into your valise. And then they talked of whether you can really make a cast with a rod made in small sections, and the second man showed that you could by making a cast right there in the car, of over sixty feet—and landed another trout.

And the man who didn't know the Washago section said he came from West Virginia, so the first man asked him if it wasn't too hot for trout down there, but it seems not, or at least not up in the hills. In fact the second man took the first man away up into the hills above the Kenowsha and cooled him right off, and then fed him on trout with West Virginia bacon that he cooked over a brush fire.

So that led to talk about how a *brown* trout can stay in water up to seventy degrees; but after all, is a brown trout any damn good



anyway: would you call it a *trout* in the real sense . . . and for the matter of that even a rainbow trout isn't in it with a straight speckled brook trout: the colour may be all right, but for sport and for eating, there's no comparison.

And incidentally they told one another who they were and the first man said that he was in hardware and the second man, it seemed, was in paper boxes; but they weren't really. They were both in trout.

And when the porter came to the door and said to one of them—  
"Toronto, sir, you change here!"

They said good-bye like old friends. And the first man said to the second man that if he ever got as far down as Buckhannon, he must certainly take him to the Kenowsha; and the second man said that if the first man ever got as far up as Toronto, he must certainly take him up into the Washago country. . . .

And each, when he got home, said to his wife, "I met a hell of a nice feller on the train coming down."

And that's why fishermen's wives are never jealous of them when ~~they~~ leave home.

## A LECTURE ON WALKING

I WOULD like to deliver a lecture, in set form like a college lecture, on the subject of Walking. It will be a great pleasure to me to do so, for it is now six years since an ungrateful college foiled me, on the mere ground of senile decline, to give any more lectures, and took away all my students. So now for a brief hour I want them all back, lined up on the benches to listen to a lecture on Walking. I want especially, not the younger ones, but those well into middle life, or even wheezing their way into old age; pleasant, puffy, comfortable-looking fellows as seen sitting in a leather armchair in a club but in poor shape if you start them walking.

There! Line them up. You, sir, the large student on the left, you are, am I not right, the president of a bank? Well, you needn't put on any plutocratic airs in this class. I doubt if you could walk half a mile. You say you played left wing on the football team? I don't doubt it. But I want you all to understand, gentlemen, that it's no use your talking about exercise you took thirty years ago. That won't help you now. You, sir, just sitting down on my left, are, I believe, an Anglican Bishop. Now, don't tell me about your championship high jump in 1910. Everybody knows, on the side, that you jumped your way into your bishopric. How high could you jump now?

Now, gentlemen, please open your notebooks and write the heading WALKING, and then when I come to each important point, I'll tell you what to write. Don't write till I tell you. Remember how we used to do it.

You might begin, please, with a little note, "*Professor's own experience: a devotee of walking for many years: has walked the Montreal mountain every morning nearly as far as the cemetery.*" On second thought, gentlemen, please delete the phrase, "*nearly as far as the cemetery.*" It might be misunderstood.

And what is more, gentlemen, I am led by such walks to observe how little of walking for walking's sake survives today. It is my ex-

perience again and again to walk Mount Royal at nine o'clock in the morning and see not a soul in sight. The motor car, gentlemen, has grave sins to answer for in cutting us out from the air and exercise that once were ours. Look at yourselves, gentlemen: I need hardly say more.

Now will you please write in your notes, "*Definition of Walking*," and for that I will ask you to turn to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Volume 23, page 301, division 1, or, if you prefer it, don't turn to it but take my word for it, and write it at my dictation. "Walking is the art of progression by setting one foot methodically before the other and is the most venerable and universal way of locomotion among mankind, and has been for a million years." The same authority explains further, in regard to the technique of walking, that in plain straightforward walking one must not lift one foot into the air before the other has come down to the ground; in other words, the walker must not have both his feet in the air. This caution, in your case, gentlemen, makes me smile: I don't think there is much fear of any of you leaving the ground with both feet at once. All you need to understand from this is to distinguish *walking* in the proper sense from *shuffling*, which is what you do from your club lounge to your club dining room, and *shambling*, which is what you do when compelled to go along the street a hundred yards to look for a taxi.

Nor are we concerned here with the technique of walking when it becomes part of competitive athletics, for it's far too strenuous, I fear, for any of you. Walking in that form is, happily, dying out. Walking matches used to be held on a terrific scale two generations ago, both in England and in this country. Seven-mile walking races for an American championship were introduced in 1876, and in the present century the revival of the Olympic Games led to walking *marathons* on a scale of one to twenty-five miles. Walking, in this strenuous and distressing sense, seems to me, gentlemen, as no doubt to you, a ghastly business. I am thinking of walking only as the gentle and kindly exercise of the man who cannot spend his whole day indoors and must perforce be out in the open—as the relaxation of the office worker, tired of ink and paper and four walls, as the inspiration of the poet, and as the quiet *saunter* of the day-dreamer.

I will ask you, gentlemen, to make a note here on that word *saunter*, as well illustrating our subject. Kindly mark it, "*interesting note by professor on word SAUNTER.*" This term, you will be surprised and delighted to hear, is one of the most curious in our language. It is derived from *Sainte Terre* (Holy Land). In early, pious days a knight with sins that needed absolution and a soul that needed redemption made a *Sainte Terre*, a Holy Land pilgrimage. This was originally a journey beset with danger, nobly braved.

Presently, with beautiful travel up the Mediterranean among olive groves and enchanted islands, the pilgrimage turned into a *saunter*, a delightful dream journey. So will you, too, find it, gentlemen, if you will take the practice of a daily walk. At first, you will find it a hard matter to gird up your loins (as near as you can find them) and step out three, four, five miles or more at a stretch. But with habit and continuance, and above all with the regularity that never misses, walking will become of such unconscious ease that you will, as it were, step out of yourself and find yourself *sauntering*—timeless, effortless, with no other thought beyond the quiet pleasure of not thinking. I cannot forbear to quote again from this high authority cited ahead, which thus expounds this aspect of a customary walk. "Walking in the nobler sense is a measured progress inspired of the woods and hills, by rivers and the flowers of the field, a serene partaking of the enduring sources of joy."

Well, gentlemen, with such an admirable ideal before us, I think we may now come down to particulars such as the question of companionship in walking, of hours and times and places, and the particular routine and regularity, if any, with which we see fit to surround it.

I begin, then, with the question of companionship. Should one walk alone, or is it better to walk with a companion? I think I hear a member of the class saying behind his hand, "What about women?"—and I may say I don't like the expression of his eye as he said it, nor the nudge he gave the student next to him, in whom I think I recognize one of our leading stockbrokers. Well, gentlemen, since the question of women has come up, I'll answer it. You are all, I am sure, elderly or, at any rate, discreet men, who would not, I am sure, repeat outside of the class anything said here in confidence. And in that sense I say, "Have nothing to do with going



for walks with a woman." You will find her, gentlemen, a bore and a nuisance, or else you will find her too interesting, and in that case, gentlemen, there is no telling where your walks will lead you. Understand, gentlemen, that in this matter there can be no middle path. I am aware that some of you perhaps will say that you are able to associate with women as "comrades"—yes, that is the word—that you look on them as *comrades*. All I can say is that if you do, you are a nut. I had not intended to bring up this topic of walking with women, and will let it go at that. I will admit, of course, that you may, if you wish, go for a walk with your little granddaughter or grandniece of thirteen, provided that you make her keep her mouth shut. It will make a very pretty picture, your walking with her among the falling autumn leaves, especially if you keep well in the front of the picture yourself, and keep the child in the background.

But, far better, walk with a man of your own kind and size, and congenial in the sense that you have nothing in particular to say to one another. Silence, if deliberate, is artificial and irritating; but silence that is unconscious gives human companionship without human boredom. But if, by habit, you and your companion must talk, then take care to agree about everything all the time. Whatever he says, you say, "That's very true," and then you don't need to listen to what he's saying. If you miss a piece of it, you say, "That's very true when you come to think of it," and by that means you don't need to come to think of it at all. . . . There is, indeed, no better companionship than this trudging along, almost without conversation, but not quite, or at best with a repetition of the same remarks that have done duty between you already for years past.

Above all, gentlemen, avoid walking with a nature lover. Nothing spoils a walk so much as the observance of "nature"; I mean the details of the coming and going of birds, of the arrival of the first woodpecker and the departure of the last crow, and the first touch of green on the willow and the last seared yellow of the birch leaf. Leave all that stuff out. When you're walking, you're just out-of-doors—that's all. You're not an almanac.

A gentleman in the class asked me, "How long should one walk every day, to call it walking?" The question is an excellent one, so excellent that I was coming to it anyway. I will answer thus, "The ideal walk should last up to the point where one is *comfortably tired*."



That happy phrase covers it all. Some of you, I fear, would be uncomfortably tired in about a quarter of an hour. But a man in any sort of condition has not begun to walk till he has walked for half an hour. Observe that a man's duties in the daytime generally prevent him from taking a real walk in the earlier hours of the day. Hence, to practise walking, probably the walker must walk twice a day. The morning walk of a mere half-hour before office or lecture time is rounded out by the real walk when the day's work is done and dinner still two hours away. You must come in, gentlemen, from your walk to your food; that is the real sequence: half an hour before breakfast or half an hour before lunch, and then the real thing, a six-mile walk (two hours), and come in *comfortably tired* to dinner with such an appetite as you have never had since you left the old farm, which all successful men in this country left at the age of twelve.

You will perhaps object that after such a walk you would be good for nothing in the evening. Quite so. That's what you ought to be good for. But, my dear sir, if you will let me say it to you quite frankly, what good do you think you are in the evening anyway? What you mean is that if you don't walk and don't take any exercise in the open air in the afternoon, then after dinner you can get half "lit up," and "go strong"—I think that was your phrase—till one in the morning. That's right, and go all flabby when you get up the next morning.

But how much better to get that comfortably tired feeling, to eat that marvellous dinner, and after it to sit down in front of a good fire, with a pipe of tobacco and a book of Ancient History, and a decanter in sight out of the corner of your eye—and then, in less than no time, off you drowse to sleep—the book, the decanter, the pipe, all forgotten—and stay asleep till bedtime. . . .

That's what walking will do: and that is why it has lasted a million years.

But, gentlemen, I hear your motor cars outside. Your chauffeurs are getting impatient. The class is dismissed.

## PERSONAL EXPERIMENTS WITH THE BLACK BASS

IT was my good fortune to spend a large part of the summer just past in fishing for bass. The season may be regarded as now definitely closed, and the time is appropriate for a scientific summarizing of the results achieved and the information gained.

My experiments are entitled to all the greater weight in as much as a large part of them were conducted in the immediate presence of so well known a man as Mr. John Counsell of Hamilton, Ontario, who acted as my assistant. Mr. Counsell very kindly permits me to say that all statements, measurements, and estimates of weight contained in the following discussion are personally vouched for by him. He has even offered to lend his oath, or any number of his oaths, to the accuracy of my statements. But it has been thought wiser not to use Mr. Counsell's oath in print.

I take this opportunity in turn to express my high appreciation of the hardihood, the endurance and the quiet courage manifested by my assistant throughout our experiments. If Mr. Counsell was ever afraid of a bass I never knew it. I have seen him immersed in mud on the banks of the river where we fished. I have observed him submerged under rapids; I have seen Mr. Counsell fall from the top of rocks into water so deep and remain under so long that I was just cranking up our car to go home, and yet I never knew him to hesitate for a moment to attack a black bass at sight and kill it.

I can guarantee to anybody who is hesitating whether or not to invite Mr. Counsell to go fishing, that he is a man who may safely be taken anywhere where the bass are, and is an adornment to any party of sportsmen.

I turn therefore with added confidence to the tabulated results drawn by myself and Mr. Counsell from our experiments.

In the first place, we are able to throw much light on the vexed

question as to the circumstances under which the bass bite. There has been a persistent belief that during the glare of the middle part of the day the bass do not bite. This belief is correct. They do not. It is also true that in the sunnier part of the morning itself the black bass do not, or does not, bite. Nor do they, or rather does it, bite during the more drowsy part of the afternoon.

Let the angler, therefore, on a day when the sun is bright in a cloudless sky, lay aside his rod from eight in the morning till six in the afternoon. On such a day as this the fish do not bite. The experienced angler knows this. He selects a suitable tree, lies down beneath it and waits. Nor do the bass, oddly enough, bite, on a cloudy day. The bass dislike clouds. Very often the appearance of a single cloud on the horizon is a sign for the experienced angler to retire to a quiet spot upon the bank and wait till the cloud goes by. It has been said that the bass bite well in the rain. This is an error. They don't.

Another popular error that ought, in the interest of the young angler, to be dispelled is that the bass bite in the evening; that is not so. The bass loves the day, and at the first sign of darkness it sinks to the bottom of the water from which it obstinately refuses to move.

I am well aware that the young angler might find himself seriously discouraged at what has just been said. "What then!" he might ask, "do the bass never bite at all? Is it never possible to get a bite from them?" To this I answer very positively that they both do and it is.

The results, in fine, of the experiments carried on by Mr. Counsell and myself lead us to the conclusion that the bass bites at midnight. We offer this only as a preliminary hypothesis, for which perhaps a more ample verification will be found in the ensuing season. We ourselves have never fished till midnight. And we observed that even the most persistent angler, as the darkness gathers around him, becomes discouraged, and at some time before midnight, quits. Here he is in error. Our advice to the angler in all such cases is to keep on until midnight. The black bass which is chary of biting in the glare of the day and which dislikes the cool of the evening, must, we argue, be just in the mood needed at midnight.

Nor let the young angler run away with the idea that the black bass *never* bites in the daytime. If he (the young angler) does this he

must be hauled in again on the reel of actual experience. They do and they have. I recall in particular one case in point in the experiments of Mr. Counsell and myself. At the time of which I speak we were fishing from a rocky ledge at the edge of the river that was the scene of our operations. The circumstances were most propitious. The hour was just before daylight, so that there was still an agreeable sense of chilliness in the air. It was raining heavily as we took our places on the rock. Much of this rain, though not all of it, had gone down our shirts. There had been a certain amount of lightning, two cracks of which had hit Mr. Counsell in the neck. In short, the surroundings were all that the most ardent fisherman could desire.

For a moment the rain cleared, a first beam of sunlight appeared through the woods on the bank, and at that very moment Mr. Counsell called to me that he had a bite. I immediately dropped my rod into the river, and urged Mr. Counsell to avoid all excitement; to keep as calm as possible, and to maintain his hold upon his line. Mr. Counsell in turn exhorted me to be cool, and assured me of his absolute readiness should the fish bite again to take whatever action the circumstances might seem to us to warrant. I asked him in the meantime whether he was prepared to give me an idea of the dimensions of the fish which had bitten him. He assured me that he could, and to my great delight informed me that the fish was at least three feet long. The reader may imagine, then, with what suppressed excitement Mr. Counsell and I waited for this monster to return and bite again. Nor had we long to wait. Not more than two or three minutes had elapsed when I suddenly saw my assistant's line in violent commotion, Mr. Counsell exerting his whole strength in a magnificent combat with the fish. I called to Mr. Counsell to be cautious and adjured him to the utmost calmness, running up and down on the bank and waving my arms to emphasize what I said. But there was no need for such an exhortation. Mr. Counsell had settled down to one of those steady fights with the black bass which are the proudest moments in the angler's life. The line was now drawn absolutely taut and motionless. Mr. Counsell was exerting his full strength at one end and the fish, apparently lying at a point of vantage at the very bottom of the river, was exerting its full strength at the other. But here intervened one of those disappointments which the angler must learn to bear as best he may. The bass is



nothing if not cunning. And an older, larger fish of the extraordinary size and mass of the one in question shows often an almost incredible strategy in escaping from the hook. After a few minutes of hard strain my assistant suddenly became aware that the fish had left his hook, and at the very moment of escaping had contrived to fasten the hook deep into a log at the bottom of the river. Investigation with a pike pole showed this to be the case. This trick on the part of the bass is, of course, familiar to all experienced anglers. It was fortunate in this case that Mr. Counsell had contrived to get such an accurate estimate of the size of the fish before it escaped.

The young angler may well ask how it is that we are able to know the size of a fish as soon as it bites, without even the slightest glimpse of it. To this I can merely answer that we do know. It is, I suppose, an instinct. The young angler will get it himself if he goes on fishing long enough.

Nor need it be supposed that there is anything unusual or out of the way in the means of escape adopted by the particular bass in question. Indeed, I have on various occasions known the bass not merely to contrive to pass the hook into a log, but even, after it has been firmly hooked, to substitute a smaller fish than itself. I recall in particular one occasion when Mr. Counsell called to me that he had a fish. I ran to his side at once, encouraging and exhorting him as I did so. In this instance the fish came towards the top of the water with a rush: we were both able to distinguish it clearly as it moved below the surface. It was a magnificent black bass measuring seventeen inches from its face to its tail, and weighing four and a half pounds. The gleam of its scales as it shot through the foaming water is a sight that I shall not readily forget. The fish dived low. Meantime, Mr. Counsell had braced himself so as to exert his full strength and I placed myself behind him with my arms around his body to prevent the fish from dragging him into the stream. By this strategy the fish was thrown clear up on the rock, where Mr. Counsell attacked it at once and beat the breath out of it with a boat hook. But judge of our surprise when we found that the fish landed was not the fish originally caught on the hook. The bass had contrived in its downward plunge to free itself from the hook and to replace itself by a yellow perch six inches long.



From what has been said above, it is only too clear that the life of the black bass fisherman has its disappointments and its hardships. The black bass is wary and elusive, more crafty, for example, than the lobster, and a gamer fighter than the sardine. The angler must face danger and discomfort. He gets rained upon: he falls into the river: he gets struck by lightning. But, for myself, when the ice of the winter has cleared away and the new season opens up, I ask no better fate than to be out again at daybreak with Mr. Counsell sitting on a rock beside the river, with the rain soaking into our shirts, waiting for a bite.

## BACK TO THE BUSH

I HAVE a friend called Billy, who has the Bush Mania. By trade he is a doctor, but I do not think that he needs to sleep out of doors. In ordinary things his mind appears sound. Over the tops of his gold-rimmed spectacles, as he bends forward to speak to you, there gleams nothing but amiability and kindliness. Like all the rest of us he is, or was until he forgot it all, an extremely well-educated man.

I am aware of no criminal strain in his blood. Yet Billy is in reality hopelessly unbalanced. He has the Mania of the Open Woods.

Worse than that, he is haunted with the desire to drag his friends with him into the depths of the Bush.

Whenever we meet he starts to talk about it.

Not long ago I met him in the club.

"I wish," he said, "you'd let me take you clear away up the Gatineau."

"Yes, I wish I would, I don't think," I murmured to myself, but I humoured him and said:

"How do we go, Billy, in a motor-car or by train?"

"No, we paddle."

"And is it up-stream all the way?"

"Oh, yes," Billy said enthusiastically.

"And how many days do we paddle all day to get up?"

"Six."

"Couldn't we do it in less?"

"Yes," Billy answered, feeling that I was entering into the spirit of the thing, "if we start each morning just before daylight and paddle hard till moonlight, we could do it in five days and a half."

"Glorious! and are there portages?"

"Lots of them."

"And at each of these do I carry two hundred pounds of stuff up a hill on my back?"

"Yes."

"And will there be a guide, a genuine, dirty-looking Indian guide?"

"Yes."

"And can I sleep next to him?"

"Oh, yes, if you want to."

"And when we get to the top, what is there?"

"Well, we go over the height of land."

"Oh, we do, do we? And is the height of land all rock and about three hundred yards up-hill? And do I carry a barrel of flour up it? And does it roll down and crush me on the other side? Look here, Billy, this trip is a great thing, but it is too luxurious for me. If you will have me paddled up the river in a large iron canoe with an awning, carried over the portages in a sedan chair, taken across the height of land in a palanquin or a howdah, and lowered down the other side in a derrick, I'll go. Short of that, the thing would be too fattening."

Billy was discouraged and left me. But he has since returned repeatedly to the attack.

He offers to take me to the head-waters of the Batiscan. I am content at the foot.

He wants us to go to the sources of the Attahwapiscat. I don't.

He says I ought to see the grand chutes of the Kewakasis. Why should I?

I have made Billy a counter-proposition that we strike through the Adirondacks (in the train) to New York, from there portage to Atlantic City, then to Washington, carrying our own grub (in the dining-car), camp there a few days (at the Willard), and then back, I to return by train and Billy on foot with the outfit.

The thing is still unsettled.

Billy, of course, is only one of thousands that have got this mania. And the autumn is the time when it rages at its worst.

Every day there move northward trains, packed full of lawyers, bankers, and brokers, headed for the bush. They are dressed up to look like pirates. They wear slouch hats, flannel shirts, and leather breeches with belts. They could afford much better clothes than these, but they won't use them. I don't know where they get these clothes. I think the railroad lends them out. They have guns between their knees and big knives at their hips. They smoke the worst to-

bacco they can find, and they carry ten gallons of alcohol per man in the baggage car.

In the intervals of telling lies to one another they read the railroad pamphlets about hunting. This kind of literature is deliberately and fiendishly contrived to infuriate their mania. I know all about these pamphlets because I write them. I once, for instance, wrote up, from imagination, a little place called Dog Lake at the end of a branch line. The place had failed as a settlement, and the railroad had decided to turn it into a hunting resort. I did the turning. I think I did it rather well, rechristening the lake and stocking the place with suitable varieties of game. The pamphlet ran like this:

"The limpid waters of Lake Owatawetness (the name, according to the old Indian legends of the place, signifies, The Mirror of the Almighty) abound with every known variety of fish. Near to its surface, so close that the angler may reach out his hand and stroke them, schools of pike, pickerel, mackerel, doggerel, and chickerel jostle one another in the water. They rise instantaneously to the bait and swim gratefully ashore holding it in their mouths. In the middle depth of the waters of the lake, the sardine, the lobster, the kippered herring, the anchovy and other tinned varieties of fish disport themselves with evident gratification, while even lower in the pellucid depths the dog-fish, the hog-fish, the log-fish, and the sword-fish whirl about in never-ending circles.

"Nor is Lake Owatawetness merely an Angler's Paradise. Vast forests of primeval pine slope to the very shores of the lake, to which descend great droves of bears—brown, green, and bear-coloured—while as the shades of evening fall, the air is loud with the lowing of moose, cariboo, antelope, cantelope, musk-oxes, muskrats, and other graminivorous mammalia of the forest. These enormous quadrumana generally move off about 10.30 P.M., from which hour until 11.45 P.M. the whole shore is reserved for bison and buffalo.

"After midnight hunters who so desire it can be chased through the woods, for any distance and at any speed they select, by jaguars, panthers, cougars, tigers, and jackals whose ferocity is reputed to be such that they will tear the breeches off a man with their teeth in their eagerness to sink their fangs in his palpitating flesh. Hunters, attention! Do not miss such attractions as these!"

I have seen men—quiet, reputable, well-shaved men—reading that

pamphlet of mine in the rotundas of hotels, with their eyes blazing with excitement. I think it is the jaguar attraction that hits them the hardest, because I notice them rub themselves sympathetically with their hands while they read.

Of course, you can imagine the effect of this sort of literature on the brains of men fresh from their offices, and dressed out as pirates.

They just go crazy and stay crazy.

Just watch them when they get into the bush.

Notice that well-to-do stockbroker crawling about on his stomach in the underbrush, with his spectacles shining like gig-lamps. What is he doing? He is after a cariboo that isn't there. He is "stalking" it. With his stomach. Of course, away down in his heart he knows that the cariboo isn't there and never was; but that man read my pamphlet and went crazy. He can't help it: he's got to stalk something. Mark him as he crawls along; see him crawl through a thimbleberry bush (very quietly so that the cariboo won't hear the noise of the prickles going into him), then through a bee's nest, gently and slowly, so that the cariboo will not take fright when the bees are stinging him. Sheer woodcraft! Yes, mark him. Mark him any way you like. Go up behind him and paint a blue cross on the seat of his pants as he crawls. He'll never notice. He thinks he's a hunting dog. Yet this is the man who laughs at his little son of ten for crawling round under the dining-room table with a mat over his shoulders, and pretending to be a bear.

Now see these other men in camp.

Someone has told them—I think I first started the idea in my pamphlet—that the thing is to sleep on a pile of hemlock branches. I think I told them to listen to the wind sowing (you know the word I mean), sowing and crooning in the giant pines. So there they are upside-down, doubled up on a couch of green spikes that would have killed St. Sebastian. They stare up at the sky with blood-shot, restless eyes, waiting for the crooning to begin. And there isn't a sow in sight.

Here is another man, ragged and with a six days' growth of beard, frying a piece of bacon on a stick over a little fire. Now what does he think he is? The *chef* of the Waldorf Astoria? Yes, he does, and what's more he thinks that that miserable bit of bacon, cut with a tobacco knife from a chunk of meat that lay six days in the rain, is



fit to eat. What's more, he'll eat it. So will the rest. They're all crazy together.

There's another man, the Lord help him, who thinks he has the "knack" of being a carpenter. He is hammering up shelves to a tree. Till the shelves fall down he thinks he is a wizard. Yet this is the same man who swore at his wife for asking him to put up a shelf in the back kitchen. "How the blazes," he asked, "could he nail the damn thing up? Did she think he was a plumber?"

After all, never mind.

Provided they are happy up there, let them stay.

Personally, I wouldn't mind if they didn't come back and lie about it. They get back to the city dead fagged for want of sleep, sogged with alcohol, bitten brown by the bush-flies, trampled on by the moose and chased through the brush by bears and skunks—and they have the nerve to say that they like it.

Sometimes I think they do.

Men are only animals anyway. They like to get out into the woods and growl round at night and feel something bite them.

Only why haven't they the imagination to be able to do the same thing with less fuss? Why not take their coats and collars off in the office and crawl round on the floor and growl at one another. It would be just as good.

# COME OUT INTO THE GARDEN

## PART ONE. A MEMORY OF SPRING

NO, don't trouble me with the afternoon newspaper. I've no time to read it. I want to get out into the garden and get in some good licks before it gets too dark. You say the news from Czechoslovakia looks pretty ominous, eh? Well, let it. It doesn't matter.

You just sit there, Bill, and take a drink while I finish getting ready; there's soda just near you on that tray. . . . And light your pipe, and then come out with me to the garden and you can get a smoke out there while I work.

Yes, this is my garden suit. No, I didn't *buy* it. You can't *buy* suits like this. You see this suit was originally made much too large by mistake, so I didn't care to wear it, and then by accident the moths got at it—not much, I don't mean they really hurt it—and then when it was out on a clothes-line someone put a charge of bird shot through it, and so I thought I would just keep it for the garden. See the way it sets behind—look. You see when you're working on your hands and knees a suit gets bulged like that, in the seat, I mean, and at the knees.

Say, don't fidget with that newspaper, Bill. You say it looks as if Chefoo would have to fall? Fall where? Oh, Chefoo in China—going to fall, eh? Too bad. Mind you, the Chinese are darned good gardeners. Did you ever hear of the way they plant seeds? I'm trying it out this year. They crumble earth up between their fingers, fine, ever so fine, and keep crumbling it till it's like dust, and put the seeds into that. I heard about that last winter, one night at a banquet. I sat next to a man who was a Ph.D.—no, a D.D., or a D.D.F.—anyway he'd been a college missionary in China—seemed dumb as a nut, till he got talking about how to grow cucumbers. Those missionaries learn a lot, eh—I guess we ought to support them.

There, I'm ready. Finish your drink and leave your paper there.

All right, stick it in your pocket, if you like. Now, we'll go out through the kitchen and by the back door, if you don't mind, and into the garden. . . . You might just pick up that spade, if you will, and I'll take this hoe. . . . I'll hold the door for you. . . . Oh, thanks.

Now, this little space, you see, behind the kitchen, I fenced off so as to have it for a sort of yard for drying clothes, and that sort of thing, and then I ran the hedge and fence across to separate off the rest of the ground as a garden. This hedge—of course it doesn't show to much advantage yet as the leaves are only starting to bud—this hedge is quick-set, or quick-something, I forget what. I put it in five years ago; it hasn't come along very fast, but when it *does*—it'll reach high up overhead—away up as high as my hand or higher.

Just excuse me a minute; this darn gate doesn't seem to be working this spring. You have to pick it up and lift it. There! I've been meaning to fix up a patent rig so that the gate would pull open and then shut of itself. I thought it out one day in church last winter.

Now, there we are! Quite a lay-out, isn't it? Of course at this time of year, before the leaves are out, it doesn't look so large. The first evening—five nights ago when I started work— Gee! it looked small. But it's getting bigger now.

Say, you wait and see it in blossom in June! The whole place is literally what you'd call a bower. And I always put a heavy row of sunflowers across that end!—just what you'd call a blaze of colour. But hold on now, sling down that spade and you sit down on this rustic bench and light up a pipe and just make yourself easy. I made the bench myself. I like making things like that—solid and heavy, no pretence at art, but—oh, say, I'm sorry—you're not hurt? It's that darn end-leg. It did that last spring too. Wait, I know how to fix it in a minute; or, all right, sit at the other end, it's solid as anything.

Now, you light up your pipe and be comfortable and I'll just smoke a cigarette while I sort out some seeds before I get to work. No, no, you keep the bench. I'll just turn this box up and sit on it. . . . There!

Do I do all the gardening myself? Oh, yes! there isn't any fun in it if you don't do it yourself. That's the whole idea of gardening. Dig it? No, I didn't dig it. That's pretty darn heavy work. Every spring I get a man to dig it. Of course everybody finds that there are

different things round a house you have to get a man for. I tried last week fixing the tap in the kitchen sink but I had to get a man; and for the electric stuff—in fact, for anything, don't you know, that's a little complicated or needs brain, it pays to get a man. So you see even round a garden, for a thing like heavy digging—it's really back-breaking work—I get a man.

He's a queer old character, old William, sort of crooked-backed old fellow, I don't know how old he is—but you should see him dig! He's not round here yet, or I'd show him to you. I suppose old fellows like that, they just don't mind digging, eh? Anyway I get him to come and do the digging, and then a boy for the weeding—it's mean work, you need a boy for it—and perhaps now and then I get a woman in to do the picking—you know, gooseberries and currants, and things like that. It's tiresome work; you need a woman for it. But beyond that I do the whole thing myself; especially the planning. You see in a garden there's a whole lot of planning to do; where everything is to go and a sort of timing and rotation. I made out a whole card of it one evening during a show given by our Repertory Theatre Company. Ever see them? They're great! I took nearly the whole evening to do it, on the back of the programme, and I put it in my dinner jacket pocket, and I forgot it and I suppose it got thrown away. Anyway, I know it pretty well. Now these seeds. Look at the packet—see, these are *Bordigiana*! They're for flowers all along the path (to make a border) and they come out in those beautiful masses of dense flowers low and close to the ground. No, I never grew them before, never heard of them till a fellow told me about them one day last winter at a funeral. But look what it says: "form a heavy border of deep *calceo*—" What the hell is it? Latin, perhaps; anyway you can see the effect. It explains, see, that you make a sort of little trench by pulling out all the stones—William's doing it tomorrow—and that's where they go. So I have to get this packet out marked ready, as you see, with a label *Bordigiana*, and such and such a date—that's tomorrow—he'll put them in then, and that's what you call system.

Say, I wonder if you'd like some kind of a cool drink, eh? Perhaps something with a stick in it? You take these packets of seed, if you don't mind, and mark the date on each—no, not tonight, tomorrow; I'll let the old fellow plant them; he'll be flattered to death. And I'll



just go back into the house and fetch out something to drink. Just a second. . . . Now, I'll put the glasses and the bottle on this rustic table. Neat, isn't it? Solid but sort of artistic, too. I made it myself—stop, steady! I'm afraid the thing's just a little shaky. You don't mind if I set the stuff on the ground? There! Ice in it, or not? Say when! Right! . . . You see, I always feel when I get out for an evening's gardening, there's nothing like an odd drink, just to keep a man from feeling tired; and anyway it's nice to have it here out of doors in the evening, among all the foliage—or where it's going to be—I just love nature, don't you? Here's luck!

Now let me just have half a smoke and explain to you the layout. You see it's partly flowers and partly vegetables! There's a fascination about growing vegetables—I mean really fine prize stuff. I had some lettuce here last year that I wish you could have seen: great, big heads of it. I was so proud of them I took two of them over to my grocer, perfect beauties. He gave me five cents each for them, and took two more next day. Well, you might say that that was just partly because I have a big account there, but all the same that kind of thing mounts up. Last season I took him over a cucumber, a perfect prize, I never saw anything like it. He gave me fifteen cents for it, and said that any year I had another like it, he'd be glad to take it. And early peas. Very often, in fact only four or five years ago, I had a whole basket of the earliest in town. I sold them to our club: you may have eaten some of them. Forty cents, thank you, for that one little transaction! So you see that kind of thing keeps adding up. It all cuts down your overhead.

Of course, I admit that vegetables would be nothing without flowers mixed in. I always have them here in borders or patches: right over there along the side I had a patch of nasturtiums. You ought to be here in July to see them, just a blaze of colour! and down that way a line of dahlias. You ought to see them in August. You just wait till August! . . .

Ah, here's William now! Isn't he the queer-looking bird? No, he's not so old, not seventy or only just. Excuse me; I'll just call to him a minute. William, you might just be getting that patch ready for the early corn where I showed you last night. I'll be talking to my friend here for a while. You just go ahead, eh? Where to make the line? Oh, just make it—make it—oh, I tell you—just make it where



it seems about all right, eh? All right.

Now, what about just another little tinkle of the ice? Eh! Isn't it great out here in the garden on a night like this?—so soft, eh—and yet the light seems to fade so soon, doesn't it—going already—thanks, that's plenty. Whoa! stop! . . . You were asking me do I grow asparagus? No, I don't, I'm sorry to say. I always mean to and I don't. You see, there are a lot of things like asparagus that you have to start last year—or for asparagus itself, you have to start the year before last. You lay down a bed the year before last and then let it grow its first year untouched, and even the last year only just trimmed and the third year, this year, there's your asparagus! I was thinking only last night that if I had started three years ago I could have had a good bed all along the bottom side of the garden—that way—just under the sunflowers—I mean, where the sunflowers will be—I showed you, you remember. But I'll get at it this year all right. You have to make the bed in August, and I think I'll hire old William for the whole of August (I'll be away at the sea, myself), and I'll go right at it.

What! You say you have to leave?—no, no, don't go. It's hardly dusk yet. I can work later. Often I come out here and work when it's practically dark, or sit and smoke on the bench. Stay right on. You have to go round to the Club? Jack Conway there! No! Not old Jack who was at college with us? I haven't seen Jack for years. Darn, I wish I could go over! You're going to have a game of poker, you say: but then, I'd be one too many. No? Is that so? Say, I'd love to go over, too. Wait till I just call over to William—or not, the deuce with it, I'll let him dig. Come on. Drink that up and we'll go into the house and I'll get these darn fool pants off: it won't take a second. . . . No, no, that's all right. You didn't upset my gardening. I'll be at it again tomorrow. It's Saturday, and I'm planning a regular field day! Old William is to bring another old fellow like himself and I expect to have them digging from right after lunch (my lunch) till dark. It's the exercise like that, I find, that keeps a man fit. Come on!

## PART TWO. A MEMORY OF AUTUMN

"Another year," he said, "I mean to get at it a little earlier in the spring, so as to get the weeds out of it."

We were standing looking at the autumn wreck of what he called

his garden. It was a little angle of ground about so far this way and so far that—you know how big—a quarter of an acre? I guess so, or no, not that much—yell, just a garden. The hedges and trees about it must, I suppose, in the summer have made it look like a bower. But now the leaves were mostly fallen, or thin and yellow. The wind whistled through it. Running across it were some ragged stalks of corn still standing—the leaves—or whatever you call them—a faded brown with streaks of mildew. It all seemed pretty empty and forlorn.

“A snug spot, isn’t it?” said my gardener friend. Lord knows he didn’t seem to see the desolation of it. To him it was the same little embowered enchantment where he had worked on his hands and knees in the long June twilight, his wife holding the trowel for him while he planted—what was it?—oh, yes, the Dutch bulbs for a border, the ones that grow six feet high— No, they didn’t come up. He thinks he planted them too deep.

“Another year,” he said, “I’ll set them just almost on the surface.” “Another year”—that’s always the tenor of his and other gardener talk. “Another year!” And each year they try again, and the garden ends in weeds, and frost and wind, and little clumps of half-sized beet-roots under a mist of fox-grass, and a thick patch of long grass that to their fond eye is still the strawberry bed, and still they say, “Another year!” Our human kind, so we read in the Scripture, began in a Garden. So we never want to leave it. I have no doubt that Adam said to Eve, “Another year I’ll try pruning the apple trees earlier.”

“These strawberries,” said my friend, pointing to what I saw as a patch of grass and what he saw as a bed of strawberry plants with invisible weeds, “would have done better if we had kept the grass down. I really meant to cut the runners off and make a new bed, but I didn’t get time. Another year I certainly will.”

“Did you have any strawberries this year?” I asked.

“Oh, my, yes, lots, or well, at any rate, once or twice, my wife and I had a great bowl of them—all we could eat.”

I know just how much a loving wife can eat, or fail to eat, under those circumstances. She reaches repletion at a cost—if they bought the strawberries—at about two cents. But there’s no use applying cost or accounting to amateur gardening. It won’t stand it.

"Those beets," began my friend.

"Which beets?" I asked.

"Here, you see them—just along past your feet in a row. They go right across the garden."

Then I saw them, the half-withered tops above the fox-grass and the roots, or bodies, or bottoms or whatever you call them, just feebly out of the ground.

"The beets," continued the gardener, "are a failure." It is characteristic of amateur gardeners that they like at times to admit failure in an offhand way. It seems to indicate huge success elsewhere.

"I think," he said, "I gave them too heavy a dose of nitrate."

"Nitrate" is the name of a white powder that my friend keeps in his "garden house" (a little shed 4 x 3 at the corner of the lot). I have noticed him often in the spring when the gardening is at its height, and green bursting out everywhere, crawling along on his hands and knees, and dusting on nitrate. If nothing else will kill the stuff, that will.

But it seems that you don't need, in such a garden, to take steps to kill *everything*. The birds, it appears, will look after a lot of it.

"These were the peas," he said. "The birds got them." He pointed to a sort of trellis work of lath sticks with fragments of dried yellow vines, or leaves, clinging to them, or even tied to them. It must have taken hours and hours to make that trellis. But it has the effect, I believe, of holding the peas down from growing. All amateur gardeners use it.

"Didn't you have any?" I asked. "Oh, goodness, yes, we had one elegant feed of them—all we could eat—and then a flock of birds cleaned them out. Another year I'm going to put a sort of cover over them, a kind of movable net that I've invented."

I have long since observed that my gardening friends live on *invention*. They never *make* the things. They just invent them, mostly in winter time—all sorts of ingenious contrivances for automatic watering, for bleaching celery, and spraying with nicotine where nitrate couldn't reach.

"These beans," said my friend, "were fine." This time I didn't ask which beans. I knew there must be beans in the grass somewhere.

"The only trouble with beans," he added, "is that they got old so soon."

It is a common trouble in life. But I have often noticed its application in the gardens of my gardening friends. One day the beans are too young to pick, and a day passes and they are too old to eat. There is something about it, or like it, in the Epistle to the Corinthians. I think I've heard it at funerals.

A colder wind rustled through the little garden, shaking the leaves.

"Another year," said my friend, "I think I'll put in a cedar hedge—it will keep the garden warmer—either that, or a sort of movable fence in sections, that I invented one day on the way to work."

The wind blew again, colder and with a fleck of rain in it. The branches shook as if in denial of the fence or hedge.

"Come into the house," he said, "it's a little cold here." "A little!" I had been half frozen ever since we looked at the first empty hotbed. "Come into the house," he said, "and I'll give you a Scotch and Soda."

We went into the house. There was a flaming fire of crisp autumn sticks burning in the grate. It was warm and bright. Glasses and a decanter glittered on a tray. The light shot back in amber streaks from the whisky in the decanter.

"Now then," said my friend, "a Scotch, eh?" as he moved to pour it out.

"Do you grow your own whisky?" I asked. "Good Heavens, no!" he laughed. "What an ideal!"



## A MEDIAEVAL HOLE IN ONE

THE Middle Ages, from what we know about them, were days of pretty tall deeds and pretty tall talk. In the Middle Ages if a man accomplished a feat of arms, or a feat of dexterity, or a feat of anything, he didn't let it get spoiled for want of telling. In witness of which take the marvellous accounts of archery, swordsmanship, strength, skill, and magic which fill the pages of mediaeval romance from the *Chanson de Roland* to Walter Scott.

And there is no doubt that the "tall talk" of the Middle Ages was greatly helped along by the prevailing habit of tall drinking. They drank in those days not by the glass but by the barrel. They knew nothing of "flasks" or "cups" or "glasses," or such small degenerate measures as those of their descendants. When they wanted a real drink they knocked in the head of a "cask" or "tun" and gathered round it and drank it to the bottom of the barrel.

Even for a modest individual drink they needed a "flagon"—and a "flagon" in the Middle Ages was of the same size as one of our garden watering pots. A man who had inside him a couple of flagons of old "Malmsey" or old "Gascony," had a power of talk and energy in him no longer known among us. When it is added that old "Malmsey" only cost ten pennies for a full imperial gallon—six of our quarts—one can see that even the dark age had its bright spots and that history was not so dry as it is called.

. . . . .

As a result, not only were the deeds and feats of arms of the Middle Ages bigger than ours, but even the narration of them had more size. And the spectators and witnesses, having sopped up on their own account a few "hogsheads" of "mead" or sack, could see more, far more, than our poor dried-out audiences. In witness of which take any account of any tournament, bear fight, bullfight, archery match or rat hunt anywhere from 1000 to 1500 A.D.

For all of which deeds and performances, the running accom-



paniment of knocking in hogsheads and draining flagons kept the whole event in character.

No king in the Middle Ages ever appeared at a public tournament or joust without ordering the ends of half a dozen casks of sack to be knocked in. No royal christening was ever held without "tuns" of ale being distributed or "broached" for the populace, and "pipes" of wine being pumped into the nobility. At all big celebrations there were huge bonfires. Oxen were roasted whole. Any good man would get away with fifteen pounds of roast meat, six gallons of ale and a flagon of brandy, and go roaring home with an atmosphere round him like the mist round a brewery.

Those were great days. We cannot compete with them.

But in just one point the superiority is ours. The mediaeval people didn't have our opportunities. Their archery and their tournaments were poor stuff beside our games of to-day. Just think what would have happened if they had had such a thing as golf in the Middle Ages! Imagine the way in which, with their flagons of sack and their hogsheads of Malmsey right on the ground, they could have carried out a golf match. Imagine what they could have done in the narration of it afterwards! Conceive what could have been made of a mediaeval Hole in One. Our poor unimaginative truth-telling generation can form but little idea as to how they would have dealt with it.

What follows below represents an account of a Hole in One, as achieved in the year 1215 A.D. and related after the style of mediaeval romance. It is based on the account of the famous tournament and meeting at Ashby de la Zouche (which is in England) during the reign of King John. On that famous occasion, as Walter Scott related in his *Ivanhoe*, there was an archery match between Hubert the Norman, the protégé of King John, and the Mysterious Bowman, Locksley, otherwise Robin Hood the Saxon Outlaw. In this contest Hubert "sped his arrow" (that's the mediaeval name for what he did) with such consummate skill that it pierced the very centre of the bull's-eye, three hundred yards away. But Locksley had a still more consummate touch. He sped his shaft with such unerring dexterity that the point of it struck fair in the notch of Hubert's arrow, still sticking in the bull's-eye, and split it into two exactly even

halves! After which even the stingy King John had to treat the crowd, a whole meadowful, to about two firkins each.

Imagine what would happen if people who could write that kind of thing and people who could believe it had had a chance at a golf story.

Come! Let us turn Hubert and Locksley into their twentieth-century form and make the contest a Hole-in-One-Shot! Thus—

All was now prepared. The vast concourse of spectators, both Norman and Saxon, crowded the vacant spaces of the course, and even invaded the fairways from which the heralds and poursuivants sought in vain to dislodge them. The humbler churls, or jarls, clustered in the branches of the trees.

At intervals along the course great “butts” or “tuns,” by which we mean “vats,” had been placed, from which not only the yeomanry but even the commonry were permitted that day to drink at the King’s expense.

King John was seated on a dais beside the sandbox of Tee No. 1, at the edge of which the pious Archbishop Stephen Langton knelt in prayer for the success of the Norman Hubert. Around and about the tee, on tiers of rudely contrived benches, the Knights of the Household in full (autumn) armour were mingled with the resplendent Ladies of the Court.

“Sirrah!” said the King, turning sternly to Hubert, “dost think thou canst outswat this Saxon fellow?”

“My grandsire,” said Hubert, “played in the Hastings handicap, and it shall go hard with me an I fall short of his score.”

The King scowled but said nothing.

“What is bogey?” whispered Roger Bigod, Earl of Bygod, to Sir John Montfaucon de la Tour, who stood beside him near the tee.

“Three, so it thinks me,” answered Sir John.

“And gives either of the contestants as it were a bisque or holeth he in one stroke the fewer?”

“Nay,” said Montfaucon, “they play as man to man, or as who should say at scratch.”

At this moment the loud sound of a tucket armoured by the winding of a hobo from the second tee announced that the lists were clear.

"Let the course be measured!" commanded the Chief Marshal.

On this Sir Roger Mauleverer of the Tower and Sir Eustace, the Left-handed, Constable of the Constable, attended by six poursuivants carrying a line of silken yarn, measured the distance.

"How stands it?" asked the King.

"Four hundred ells, six firkins, and a demilitre," answered the Marshal.

At the mention of this distance—which corresponds in our modern English to more than four hundred yards—an intense hush fell upon the attendant crowd. That a mere ball no larger than a pheasant's egg could be driven over this tremendous distance by a mere blow from a mere wand of hickory, daunted the mere imagination.

The King, who well knew that the approaching contest was in reality one between Norman and Saxon and might carry with it the loss of his English crown, could ill conceal the fears that racked his evil conscience. In vain his cupbearer fetched him goblet after goblet of Gascony. Even the generous wine failed to enliven the mind or to dissipate the fears of the doomed monarch. A great silence had fallen upon the assembled knights and ladies, broken only by the murmured prayers of the saintly archbishop kneeling beside the sand-box. Even the stout hearts of such men as Sir Roger Bigod de Bygod and Sir Walter de la Tenspot almost ceased to beat.

"Have done with this delay," exclaimed the King. "Let the men begin."

Hubert the Norman stepped first onto the tee. His lithe frame, knit to a nicety, with every bone and joint working to its full efficiency, was encased in a jerkin of Andalusian wool, over a haut-de-chausse, or plus eight, of quilted worsted. He carried in his right hand a small white ball, while in his left he bore a shaft or club of hickory, the handle bound with cordovan leather and the end, or tip, or as the Normans called it the *bout*, fashioned in a heavy knot flattened on one side to a hexagonal diagonal.

The manner of the Norman Hubert was grave, but his firm movements and his steady eye showed no trace of apprehension as he adjusted the ball upon a small heap of sand upon the forward, or front, part of the tee.

"Canst do it?" queried the agonizing King, his hands writhing nervously on the handle of his sceptre.

"My grandsire . . ." began Hubert.

"You said that before," cried John. "Shoot!"

Hubert bowed and paused a moment to drink a flagon of Amsterdam gin handed to him by the King's bouteillier or bottle-washer. Then, standing poised on the balls of his feet at a distance of two Norman demis (twenty-six and a half English inches) from the ball, he waved his club in the air as if testing its weight, while his keen eye measured the velocity of the wind.

Then, as the crowd waited in breathless silence, Hubert suddenly swung the hickory to his full reach behind his shoulder and brought it down in a magnificent sweep, striking the ball with its full impact.

There was a loud resilient "click," distinctly heard by the spectators at the second tee, while a great shout arose from all the Normans as the ball rose in the air describing a magnificent parabola in its flight.

"A Hubert! A Hubert!" they shouted. "*Par le Sang de Dieu*," exclaimed Sir Roger Bigod de Bygod, "some stroke!"

Meantime the ball, glistening in the sunshine and seeming to gather force in its flight, swept above the fairway and passed high in the air over the ground posts that marked the hundred, the two hundred, and the three hundred ells, still rushing to its goal.

"By the body of St. Augustine!" cried the pious Guillaume de la Hootch, "'twill reach the green itself!"

"It has!" shouted Sir Roger Bigod. "Look! Look! They are seizing and lifting the flag! 'Tis on! 'Tis in! By the shirt of St. Ambrose, the ball is in the can!"

And as Sir Roger spoke a great shout went up from all the crowd, echoed even by the Saxon churls who lined the branches of the trees. "A Hole in One! A Hole in One!" cried the multitude, while an immediate rush was made to the barrels or vats of mead which lined the course, into which the exultant populace precipitated themselves head first.

For such readers as do not understand the old Norman game of Goffe, or Gouffe—sometimes also called Guff—it is proper to explain that in the centre of each *parterre* or *terrace*, sometimes called a *Green* or *Pelouse*—it was customary to set a sunken receptacle or can, of the kind used by the Normans to can tomatoes, into which the ball must ultimately be driven. The virtue of Hubert's stroke



was that he had driven the ball into the can (a feat for which many Normans required eight, ten, or even twenty strokes) in one single blow, an achievement called in old Norman a "Hole in One."

And now the voice of the Chief Herald could be heard calling through hautboy or megaphone:

"Hole No. 1; stroke No. 1. Hubert of Normandy scores Hole in One. Player in hand, J. Locksley, of Huntingdon, England. Clear the fairway for shot No. 2."

All eyes now turned to where the splendid figure of the mysterious Locksley, the Unknown Golfer or Gopher, ascended the first tee. It was known to all that this was in reality none other, or little other, than the Saxon outlaw Robin Hood, who was whispered to be the Earl of Huntingdon and half whispered to be, by his descent from his own grandmother, the Saxon claimant to the throne.

"How now, Locksley!" sneered the triumphant John as the Saxon appeared beside him, "canst beat that?"

Every gaze rested upon Locksley as he stood leaning upon his hickory club. His mysterious appearance at Ashby de la Zouche and the whispers as to his identity lent to him a romantic, and almost fearsome interest, while his magnificent person marked him as the beau ideal of the Saxon Golfer still seen at times even in the mimic contests of to-day.

His powerful form could have touched the balance at two hundred and eighty-five pounds avoirdupois. The massive shoulders would have seemed out of proportion but for the ample sweep of the girth or waistline and the splendid breadth of the netherward or rearward hind-quarters.

He was clad, like Hubert, in woollen jerkin and plus eights, and he bore on his feet the terrific spiked sandals of the Saxon, capable of inflicting a mortal blow.

Locksley placed his ball, and then, grasping in his iron grip the leather-bound club-headed hickory hexagonal, he looked about him with complete sang-froid and even something of amusement.

The King's boozelier, or booze-hound, now approached Locksley and, after the courtesy of the age, offered him a horn, or "jolt" of gin. The Saxon put it aside and to the astonishment of the crowd called only for water, contenting himself with a single bucketful.

"Drink'st not?" said the scowling King.



"Not in hours of busyness," said Locksley firmly.

"And canst thou outdo Hubert's shot?" sneered John.

"I know not," said Locksley carelessly; "Hubert's shot was not half bad, but I'll see if I can touch up his ball for him in the tomato can."

"Have done with boasting!" cried the King. "Tell the archbishop to count three, and then let the fellow shoot. If he fail, my lord Montfaucon and you, Roger Bigod of Bygod, see that he does not leave the tee alive."

The archbishop raised his saintly face towards the skies and began to count.

"Unum!" he said, using the neuter gender of the numeral adjective in accordance with the increasing deterioration of the Latin language which had already gone far in the year 1215 A.D.

"Duo," said the archbishop, and then in a breathless hush, as the word "tres" quivered on the lips of the ecclesiastic, Locksley's club cleft the air in a single flash of glittering sunlight and descended upon the ball with such force that the sound of the concussion echoed back from the woods beyond the farthest green.

In a moment the glittering trajectory of the missile could be followed high in its flight and then the curve of its rushing descent towards the green. For a moment the silence was so intense that even the faint rustling of the grass was audible to the ear, then the crashing concussion of the driven ball against the inner tin of the tomato can showed that Locksley also had achieved a Hole in One! But the gasp or gulp of astonishment had hardly passed when the crowd became aware that Locksley's skilled marksmanship had far surpassed the mere feat of a Hole in One accomplished by his opponent. His ball, driven with a power and accuracy that might well-nigh seem incredible, had struck against Hubert's ball inside the can at exactly the angle necessary to drive it out with great force and start it back in flight towards the first tee.

To the amazement of all beholders, Hubert's ball, easily distinguishable by two little dots on its lower face, was seen rushing in rapid flight to retrace its course above the fairway. So true was its path that it landed back precisely on the tee from which Hubert had shot it and came to rest on the little pile of sand on which the Norman gopher had originally placed it.

"By God!" shouted Bigod of Bygod, as Locksley picked up the ball and handed it with a bow to King John.

A wild shout that rose alike from the Saxon Thaness, the Danes, and even the Normans, rent the air, while even the ladies of the court, carried away in a burst of chivalrous admiration, tore off their silken baldrics and threw them at the feet of the victor.

Nobles and commons alike, Norman and Saxon together seized axe or bill and began beating in the heads of the casks in their eagerness to drink the health of the victor.

"A Locksley! A Locksley!" cried the multitude. For the moment the King paused. His ear caught in the roaring plaudits of the crowd the first note of that mighty unison of Saxon and Norman voices which was destined to cast him from his power.

He knew that any attempt against the life or person of the Saxon chieftain was without avail.

He turned to the venerable archbishop, who was prostrate beside the tee, eating sand.

"Fetch me the Magna Carta," he said, "and I'll sign it."

## FRIENDS AND RELATIVES



## MY REMARKABLE UNCLE

THE most remarkable man I have ever known in my life was my uncle Edward Philip Leacock—known to ever so many people in Winnipeg fifty or sixty years ago as E. P. His character was so exceptional that it needs nothing but plain narration. It was so exaggerated already that you couldn't exaggerate it.

When I was a boy of six, my father brought us, a family flock, to settle on an Ontario farm. We lived in an isolation unknown, in these days of radio, anywhere in the world. We were thirty-five miles from a railway. There were no newspapers. Nobody came and went. There was nowhere to come and go. In the solitude of the dark winter nights the stillness was that of eternity.

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Into this isolation there broke, two years later, my dynamic Uncle Edward, my father's younger brother. He had just come from a year's travel around the Mediterranean. He must have been about twenty-eight, but seemed a more than adult man, bronzed and self-confident, with a square beard like a Plantagenet King. His talk was of Algiers, of the African slave market; of the Golden Horn and the Pyramids. To us it sounded like the *Arabian Nights*. When we asked, "Uncle Edward, do you know the Prince of Wales?" he answered, "Quite intimately"—with no further explanation. It was an impressive trick he had.

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In that year, 1878, there was a general election in Canada, E. P. was in it up to the neck in less than no time. He picked up the history and politics of Upper Canada in a day, and in a week knew everybody in the countryside. He spoke at every meeting, but his strong point was the personal contact of electioneering, of barroom treats. This gave full scope for his marvellous talent for flattery and make-believe.

"Why, let me see"—he would say to some tattered country speci-



men beside him glass in hand—"surely, if your name is Framley, you must be a relation of my dear old friend General Sir Charles Framley of the Horse Artillery?" "Mebbe," the flattered specimen would answer. "I guess, mebbe; I ain't kept track very good of my folks in the old country." "Dear me! I must tell Sir Charles that I've seen you. He'll be so pleased." . . . In this way in a fortnight E. P. had conferred honours and distinctions on half the township of Georgina. They lived in a recaptured atmosphere of generals, admirals and earls. Vote? How else could they vote than conservative, men of family like them?

It goes without saying that in politics, then and always, E. P. was on the conservative, the *aristocratic* side, but along with that was hail-fellow-well-met with the humblest. This was instinct. A democrat can't condescend. He's down already. But when a conservative stoops, he conquers.

The election, of course, was a walk-over. E. P. might have stayed to reap the fruits. But he knew better. Ontario at that day was too small a horizon. For these were the days of the hard times of Ontario farming, when mortgages fell like snowflakes, and farmers were sold up, or sold out, or went "to the States," or faded humbly underground.

But all the talk was of Manitoba now opening up. Nothing would do E. P. but that he and my father must go west. So we had a sale of our farm, with refreshments, old-time fashion, for the buyers. The poor, lean cattle and the broken machines fetched less than the price of the whisky. But E. P. laughed it all off, quoted that the star of the Empire glittered in the west, and off to the West they went, leaving us children behind at school.

They hit Winnipeg just on the rise of the boom, and E. P. came at once into his own and rode on the crest of the wave. There is something of magic appeal in the rush and movement of a "boom" town—a Winnipeg of the 80's, a Carson City of the 60's. . . . Life comes to a focus; it is all here and now, all *present*, no past and no outside—just a clatter of hammers and saws, rounds of drinks and rolls of money. In such an atmosphere every man seems a remark-

able fellow, a man of exception; individuality separates out and character blossoms like a rose.

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E. P. came into his own. In less than no time he was in everything and knew everybody, conferring titles and honours up and down Portage Avenue. In six months he had a great fortune, on paper; took a trip east and brought back a charming wife from Toronto; built a large house beside the river; filled it with pictures that he said were his ancestors, and carried on in it a roaring hospitality that never stopped.

His activities were wide. He was president of a bank (that never opened), head of a brewery (for brewing the Red River) and, above all, secretary-treasurer of the Winnipeg Hudson Bay and Arctic Ocean Railway that had a charter authorizing it to build a road to the Arctic Ocean, when it got ready. They had no track, but they printed stationery and passes, and in return E. P. received passes over all North America.

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But naturally his main hold was politics. He was elected right away into the Manitoba Legislature. They would have made him Prime Minister but for the existence of the grand old man of the province, John Norquay. But even at that in a very short time Norquay ate out of E. P.'s hand, and E. P. led him on a string. I remember how they came down to Toronto, when I was a schoolboy, with an adherent group of "Westerners," all in heavy buffalo coats and bearded like Assyrians. E. P. paraded them on King Street like a returned explorer with savages.

Naturally E. P.'s politics remained conservative. But he pitched the note higher. Even the ancestors weren't good enough. He invented a Portuguese Dukedom (some one of our family once worked in Portugal)—and he conferred it, by some kind of reversion, on my elder brother Jim who had gone to Winnipeg to work in E. P.'s office. This enabled him to say to visitors in his big house, after looking at the ancestors—to say in a half-whisper behind his hand, "Strange to think that two deaths would make that boy a Portuguese Duke." But Jim never knew which two Portuguese to kill.

To aristocracy E. P. also added a touch of peculiar prestige by

always being apparently just about to be called away—imperially. If some one said, "Will you be in Winnipeg all winter, Mr. Leacock?" he answered, "It will depend a good deal on what happens in West Africa." Just that; West Africa beat them.

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Then came the crash of the Manitoba boom. Simple people, like my father, were wiped out in a day. Not so E. P. The crash just gave him a lift as the smash of a big wave lifts a strong swimmer. He just went right on. I believe that in reality he was left utterly bankrupt. But it made no difference. He used credit instead of cash. He still had his imaginary bank, and his railway to the Arctic Ocean. Hospitality still roared and the tradesmen still paid for it. Any one who called about a bill was told that E. P.'s movements were uncertain and would depend a good deal on what happened in Johannesburg. That held them another six months.

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It was during this period that I used to see him when he made his periodic trips "east," to impress his creditors in the West. He floated, at first very easily, on hotel credit, borrowed loans and unpaid bills. A banker, especially a country town banker, was his natural mark and victim. He would tremble as E. P. came in, like a stock-dove that sees a hawk. E. P.'s method was so simple; it was like showing a farmer peas under thimbles. As he entered the banker's side-office he would say: "I say. Do you fish? Surely that's a greenhart casting-rod on the wall?" (E. P. knew the names of everything.) In a few minutes the banker, flushed and pleased, was exhibiting the rod, and showing flies in a box out of a drawer. When E. P. went out he carried a hundred dollars with him. There was no security. The transaction was all over.

He dealt similarly with credit, with hotels, livery stables and bills in shops. They all fell for his method. He bought with lavish generosity, never asking a price. He never suggested pay till just as an afterthought, just as he was going out. And then: "By the way, please let me have the account promptly. I may be going away," and, in an aside to me, as if not meant for the shop, "Sir Henry Loch has cabled again from West Africa." And so out; they had never seen him before; nor since.

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The proceeding with a hotel was different. A country hotel was, of course, easy, in fact too easy. E. P. would sometimes pay such a bill in cash, just as a sportsman won't shoot a sitting partridge. But a large hotel was another thing. E. P., on leaving—that is, when all ready to leave, coat, bag and all—would call for his bill at the desk. At the sight of it he would break out into enthusiasm at the reasonableness of it. "Just think!" he would say in his "aside" to me, "compare that with the Hotel Crillon in Paris!" The hotel proprietor had no way of doing this; he just felt that he ran a cheap hotel. Then another "aside," "Do remind me to mention to Sir John how admirably we've been treated; he's coming here next week." "Sir John" was our Prime Minister and the hotel keeper hadn't known he was coming—and he wasn't. . . . Then came the final touch—"Now, let me see . . . seventy-six dollars . . . seventy-six. . . . You give me"—and E. P. fixed his eye firmly on the hotel man—"give me twenty-four dollars, and then I can remember to send an even hundred." The man's hand trembled. But he gave it.

This does not mean that E. P. was in any sense a crook, in any degree dishonest. His bills to him were just "deferred pay," like the British debts to the United States. He never did, never contemplated, a crooked deal in his life. All his grand schemes were as open as sunlight—and as empty.

In all his interviews E. P. could fashion his talk to his audience. On one of his appearances I introduced him to a group of college friends, young men near to degrees, to whom degrees mean everything. In casual conversation E. P. turned to me and said, "Oh, by the way you'll be glad to know that I've just received my honorary degree from the Vatican—at last!" The "at last" was a knock-out—a degree from the Pope, and overdue at that!

Of course it could not last. Gradually credit crumbles. Faith weakens. Creditors grow hard, and friends turn their faces away. Gradually E. P. sank down. The death of his wife had left him a widower, a shuffling, half-shabby figure, familiar on the street, that would have been pathetic but for his indomitable self-belief, the



illumination of his mind. Even at that, times grew hard with him. At length even the simple credit of the barrooms broke under him. I have been told by my brother Jim—the Portuguese Duke—of E. P. being put out of a Winnipeg bar by an angry bar-tender who at last broke the mesmerism. E. P. had brought in a little group, spread up the fingers of one hand and said, “Mr. Leacock, five!” . . . The bar-tender broke into oaths. E. P. hooked a friend by the arm. “Come away,” he said. “I’m afraid the poor fellow’s crazy! But I hate to report him.”

Presently even his power to travel came to an end. The railways found out at last that there wasn’t any Arctic Ocean, and anyway the printer wouldn’t print.

Just once again he managed to “come east.” It was in June of 1891. I met him forging along King Street in Toronto—a trifle shabby but with a plug hat with a big band of crape round it. “Poor Sir John,” he said. “I felt I simply must come down for his funeral.” Then I remembered that the Prime Minister was dead, and realized that kindly sentiment had meant free transportation.

That was the last I ever saw of E. P. A little after that some one paid his fare back to England. He received, from some family trust, a little income of perhaps two pounds a week. On that he lived, with such dignity as might be, in a lost village in Worcestershire. He told the people of the village—so I learned later—that his stay was uncertain; it would depend a good deal on what happened in China. But nothing happened in China; there he stayed, years and years. There he might have finished out, but for a strange chance of fortune, a sort of poetic justice, that gave to E. P. an evening in the sunset.

It happened that in the part of England where our family belonged there was an ancient religious brotherhood, with a monastery and dilapidated estates that went back for centuries. E. P. descended on them, the brothers seeming to him an easy mark, as brothers indeed are. In the course of his pious “retreat,” E. P. took a look into



the brothers' finances, and his quick intelligence discovered an old claim against the British Government, large in amount and valid beyond a doubt.

In less than no time E. P. was at Westminster, representing the brothers. He knew exactly how to handle British officials; they were easier even than Ontario hotel keepers. All that is needed is hints of marvellous investment overseas. They never go there but they remember how they just missed Johannesburg or were just late on Persian oil. All E. P. needed was his Arctic Railway. "When you come out, I must take you over our railway. I really think that as soon as we reach the Coppermine River we must put the shares on here; it's too big for New York. . . ."

So E. P. got what he wanted. The British Government are so used to old claims that it would as soon pay as not. There are plenty left.

The brothers got a whole lot of money. In gratitude they invited E. P. to be their permanent manager; so there he was, lifted into ease and affluence. The years went easily by, among gardens, orchards and fishponds old as the Crusades.

When I was lecturing in London in 1921 he wrote to me: "Do come down; I am too old now to travel; but any day you like I will send a chauffeur with a car and two lay-brothers to bring you down." I thought the "lay-brothers" a fine touch—just like E. P.

I couldn't go. I never saw him again. He ended out his days at the monastery, no cable calling him to West Africa. Years ago I used to think of E. P. as a sort of humbug, a source of humour. Looking back now I realize better the unbeatable quality of his spirit, the mark, we like to think just now, of the British race.

If there is a paradise, I am sure he will get in. He will say at the gate—"Peter? Then surely you must be a relation of Lord Peter of Tichfield?"

But if he fails, then, as the Spaniards say so fittingly, "May the earth lie light upon him."

## THE HALLUCINATION OF MR. BUTT

IT is the hallucination of Mr. Butt's life that he lives to do good. At whatever cost of time or trouble to himself, he does it. Whether people appear to desire it or not, he insists on helping them along.

His time, his company and his advice are at the service not only of those who seek them but of those who, in the mere appearances of things, are not asking for them.

You may see the beaming face of Mr. Butt appear at the door of all those of his friends who are stricken with the minor troubles of life. Whenever Mr. Butt learns that any of his friends are moving house, buying furniture, selling furniture, looking for a maid, dismissing a maid, seeking a chauffeur, suing for plumber or buying a piano—he is at their side in a moment.

So when I met him one night in the cloak room of the club putting on his raincoat and his galoshes with a peculiar beaming look on his face, I knew that he was up to some sort of benevolence.

"Come upstairs," I said, "and play billiards." I saw from his general appearance that it was a perfectly safe offer.

"My dear fellow," said Mr. Butt, "I only wish I could. I wish I had the time. I am sure it would cheer you up immensely if I could. But I'm just going out."

"Where are you off to?" I asked, for I knew he wanted me to say it.

"I'm going out to see the Everleigh-Joneses—you know them? no?—just come to the city, you know, moving into their new house, out on Seldom Avenue."

"But," I said, "that's away out in the suburbs, is it not, a mile or so beyond the car tracks?"

"Something like that," answered Mr. Butt.

"And it's going on for ten o'clock and it's starting to rain—"

"Pooh, pooh," said Mr. Butt, cheerfully, adjusting his galoshes. "I never mind the rain—does one good. As to their house. I've not

been there yet but I can easily find it. I've a very simple system for finding a house at night by merely knocking at the doors in the neighbourhood till I get it."

"Isn't it rather late to go there?" I protested.

"My dear fellow," said Mr. Butt warmly, "I don't mind that a bit. The way I look at it is, here are these two young people, only married a few weeks, just moving into their new house, everything probably upside down, no one there but themselves, no one to cheer them up"—he was wriggling into his raincoat as he spoke and working himself into a frenzy of benevolence—"good gracious, I only learned at dinner time that they had come to town, or I'd have been out there days ago—days ago—"

And with that Mr. Butt went bursting forth into the rain, his face shining with good will under the street lamps.

The next day I saw him again at the club at lunch time.

"Well," I asked, "did you find the Joneses?"

"I did," said Mr. Butt, "and, by George, I was glad that I'd gone—quite a lot of trouble to find the house (though I didn't mind that; I expected it)—had to knock at twenty houses at least to get it—very dark and wet out there—no street lights yet—however I simply pounded at the doors until someone showed a light—at every house I called out the same things, 'Do you know where the Everleigh-Joneses live?' They didn't. 'All right,' I said, 'go back to bed. Don't bother to come down.'

"But I got to the right spot at last. I found the house all dark. Jones put his head out of an upper window. 'Hullo,' I called out; 'it's Butt.' 'I'm awfully sorry,' he said, 'we've gone to bed.' 'My dear boy,' I called back, 'don't apologize at all. Throw me down the key and I'll wait while you dress. I don't mind a bit.'

"Just think of it," continued Mr. Butt, "those two poor souls going to bed at half past ten, through sheer dulness! By George, I was glad I'd come. 'Now then,' I said to myself, 'let's cheer them up a little, let's make things a little brighter here.'

"Well, down they came and we sat there on furniture cases and things and had a chat. Mrs. Jones wanted to make me some coffee. 'My dear girl,' I said (I knew them both when they were children), 'I absolutely refuse. Let *me* make it.' They protested. I insisted. I went at it—kitchen all upset—had to open at least twenty tins to

get the coffee. However, I made it at last. 'Now,' I said, 'drink it.' They said they had some an hour or so ago. 'Nonsense,' I said, 'drink it.' Well, we sat and chatted away till midnight. They were dull at first and I had to do all the talking. But I set myself to it. I can talk, you know, when I try. Presently about midnight they seemed to brighten up a little. Jones looked at his watch. 'By Jove,' he said, in an animated way, 'it's after midnight.' I think he was pleased at the way the evening was going; after that we chatted away more comfortably. Every little while Jones would say, 'By Jove, it's half past twelve,' or 'it's one o'clock,' and so on.

"I took care, of course, not to stay too late. But when I left them I promised that I'd come back to-day to help straighten things up. They protested, but I insisted."

That same day Mr. Butt went out to the suburbs and put the Joneses' furniture to rights.

"I worked all afternoon," he told me afterwards—"hard at it with my coat off—got the pictures up first—they'd been trying to put them up by themselves in the morning. I had to take down every one of them—not a single one right. 'Down they come,' I said, and went at it with a will."

A few days later Mr. Butt gave me a further report. "Yes," he said, "the furniture is all unpacked and straightened out but I don't like it. There's a lot of it I don't quite like. I half feel like advising Jones to sell it and get some more. But I don't want to do that till I'm quite certain about it."

After that Mr. Butt seemed much occupied and I didn't see him at the club for some time.

"How about the Everleigh-Joneses?" I asked. "Are they comfortable in their new house?"

Mr. Butt shook his head. "It won't do," he said. "I was afraid of it from the first. I'm moving Jones in nearer to town. I've been out all morning looking for an apartment; when I get the right one I shall move him. I like an apartment far better than a house."

So the Joneses in due course of time were moved. After that Mr. Butt was very busy selecting a piano, and advising them on wall paper and woodwork.

They were hardly settled in their new home when fresh trouble came to them.



"Have you heard about Everleigh-Jones?" said Mr. Butt one day with an anxious face.

"No," I answered.

"He's ill—some sort of fever—poor chap—been ill three days, and they never told me or sent for me—just like their grit—meant to fight it out alone. I'm going out there at once."

From day to day I had reports from Mr. Butt of the progress of Jones's illness.

"I sit with him every day," he said. "Poor chap—he was very bad yesterday for a while—mind wandered—quite delirious—I could hear him from the next room—seemed to think some one was hunting him—'Is that damn old fool gone?' I heard him say.

"I went in and soothed him. 'There is no one here, my dear boy,' I said, 'no one, only Butt.' He turned over and groaned. Mrs. Jones begged me to leave him. 'You look quite used up,' she said. 'Go out into the open air.' 'My dear Mrs. Jones,' I said, 'what *does* it matter about me?'"

Eventually, thanks no doubt to Mr. Butt's assiduous care, Everleigh-Jones got well.

"Yes," said Mr. Butt to me a few weeks later, "Jones is all right again now, but his illness has been a long hard pull. I haven't had an evening to myself since it began. But I'm paid, sir, now, more than paid for anything I've done—the gratitude of those two people—it's unbelievable—you ought to see it. Why, do you know that dear little woman is so worried for fear that my strength has been over-taxed that she wants me to take a complete rest and go on a long trip somewhere—suggested first that I should go south. 'My dear Mrs. Jones,' I said, laughing, 'that's the *one* place I will not go. Heat is the one thing I *can't* stand.' She wasn't nonplussed for a moment. 'Then go north,' she said. 'Go up to Canada, or better still go to Labrador'—and in a minute that kind little woman was hunting up railway maps to see how far north I could get by rail. 'After that,' she said, 'you can go on snowshoes.' She's found that there's a steamer to Ungava every spring and she wants me to run up there on one steamer and come back on the next."

"It must be very gratifying," I said.

"Oh, it is, it is," said Mr. Butt warmly. "It's well worth anything I do. It more than repays me. I'm alone in the world and my friends



are all I have. I can't tell you how it goes to my heart when I think of all my friends, here in the club and in the town, always glad to see me, always protesting against my little kindnesses and yet never quite satisfied about anything unless they can get my advice and hear what I have to say.

"Take Jones for instance," he continued. "Do you know, really now as a fact—the hall porter assures me of it—every time Everleigh-Jones enters the club here the first thing he does is to sing out, 'Is Mr. Butt in the club?' It warms me to think of it." Mr. Butt paused, one would have said there were tears in his eyes. But if so the kindly beam of his spectacles shone through them like the sun through April rain. He left me and passed into the cloak room.

He had just left the hall when a stranger entered, a narrow, meek man with a hunted face. He came in with a furtive step and looked about him apprehensively.

"Is Mr. Butt in the club?" he whispered to the hall porter.

"Yes, sir, he's just gone into the cloak room, sir; shall I—"

But the man had turned and made a dive for the front door and had vanished.

"Who is that?" I asked.

"That's a new member, sir, Mr. Everleigh-Jones," said the hall porter.

## THE RETROACTIVE EXISTENCE OF MR. JUGGINS

I FIRST met Juggins—really to notice him—years and years ago as a boy out camping. Somebody was trying to nail up a board on a tree for a shelf and Juggins interfered to help him.

“Stop a minute,” he said, “you need to saw the end of that board off before you put it up.” Then Juggins looked round for a saw, and when he got it he had hardly made more than a stroke or two with it before he stopped. “This saw,” he said, “needs to be filed up a bit.” So he went and hunted up a file to sharpen the saw, but found that before he could use the file he needed to put a proper handle on it, and to make a handle he went to look for a sapling in the bush, but to cut the sapling he found that he needed to sharpen up the axe. To do this, of course, he had to fix the grindstone so as to make it run properly. This involved making wooden legs for the grindstone. To do this decently Juggins decided to make a carpenter’s bench. This was quite impossible without a better set of tools. Juggins went to the village to get the tools required, and, of course, he never came back.

He was re-discovered—weeks later—in the city, getting prices on wholesale tool machinery.

After that first episode I got to know Juggins very well. For some time we were students at college together. But Juggins somehow never got far with his studies. He always began with great enthusiasm and then something happened. For a time he studied French with tremendous eagerness. But he soon found that for a real knowledge of French you need first to get a thorough grasp of Old French and Provençal. But it proved impossible to do anything with these without an absolutely complete command of Latin. This Juggins discovered could only be obtained, in any thorough way, through Sanskrit, which of course lies at the base of it. So Juggins devoted himself

to Sanskrit until he realized that for a proper understanding of Sanskrit one needs to study the ancient Iranian, the root-language underneath. This language however is lost.

So Juggins had to begin over again. He did, it is true, make some progress in natural science. He studied physics and rushed rapidly backwards from forces to molecules, and from molecules to atoms, and from atoms to electrons, and then his whole studies exploded backward into the infinities of space, still searching a first cause.

Juggins, of course, never took a degree, so he made no practical use of his education. But it didn't matter. He was very well off and was able to go straight into business with a capital of about a hundred thousand dollars. He put it at first into a gas plant, but found that he lost money at that because of the high price of the coal needed to make gas. So he sold out for ninety thousand dollars and went into coal mining. This was unsuccessful because of the awful cost of mining machinery. So Juggins sold his share in the mine for eighty thousand dollars and went in for manufacturing mining machinery. At this he would have undoubtedly made money but for the enormous cost of gas needed as motive-power for the plant. Juggins sold out of the manufacture for seventy thousand, and after that he went whirling in a circle, like skating backwards, through the different branches of allied industry.

He lost a certain amount of money each year, especially in good years when trade was brisk. In dull times when everything was unsalable he did fairly well.

Juggins' domestic life was very quiet.

Of course he never married. He did, it is true, fall in love several times; but each time it ended without result. I remember well his first love story for I was very intimate with him at the time. He had fallen in love with the girl in question utterly and immediately. It was literally love at first sight. There was no doubt of his intentions. As soon as he had met her he was quite frank about it. "I intend," he said, "to ask her to be my wife."

"When?" I asked. "Right away?"

"No," he said, "I want first to fit myself to be worthy of her."

So he went into moral training to fit himself. He taught in a Sunday school for six weeks, till he realized that a man has no business in Divine work of that sort without first preparing himself by serious

study of the history of Palestine. And he felt that a man was a cad to force his society on a girl while he is still only half acquainted with the history of the Israelites. So Juggins stayed away. It was nearly two years before he was fit to propose. By the time he *was* fit, the girl had already married a brainless thing in patent leather boots who didn't even know who Moses was.

Of course Juggins fell in love again. People always do. And at any rate by this time he was in a state of moral fitness that made it imperative.

So he fell in love—deeply in love this time—with a charming girl, commonly known as the eldest Miss Thorneycroft. She was only called eldest because she had five younger sisters; and she was very poor and awfully clever and trimmed all her own hats. Any man, if he's worth the name, falls in love with that sort of thing at first sight. So, of course, Juggins would have proposed to her; only when he went to the house he met her next sister: and of course she was younger still; and, I suppose, poorer: and made not only her own hats but her own blouses. So Juggins fell in love with her. But one night when he went to call, the door was opened by the sister younger still, who not only made her own blouses and trimmed her own hats, but even made her own tailor-made suits. After that Juggins backed up from sister to sister till he went through the whole family, and in the end got none of them.

Perhaps it was just as well that Juggins never married. It would have made things very difficult because, of course, he got poorer all the time. You see after he sold out his last share in his last business he bought with it a diminishing life annuity, so planned that he always got rather less next year than this year, and still less the year after. Thus, if he lived long enough, he would starve to death.

Meantime he has become a quaint-looking elderly man, with coats a little too short and trousers a little above his boots—like a boy. His face too is like that of a boy, with wrinkles.

And his talk now has grown to be always reminiscent. He is perpetually telling long stories of amusing times that he has had with different people that he names.

He says for example—

"I remember a rather queer thing that happened to me in a train one day—"

And if you say, "When was that, Juggins?," he looks at you in a vague way as if calculating and says, "In 1895, or 1896, I think, as near as I recall it—"

I notice, too, that his reminiscences are going further and further back. He used to base his stories on his recollections as a young man; now they are further back.

The other day he told me a story about himself and two people that he called the Harper brothers—Ned and Joe. Ned, he said, was a tremendously powerful fellow.

I asked how old Ned was and Juggins said that he was three. He added that there was another brother not so old, but a very clever fellow about—here Juggins paused and calculated—about eighteen months.

So then I realized where Juggins' retroactive existence is carrying him to. He has passed back through childhood into infancy, and presently, just as his annuity runs to a point and vanishes, he will back up clear through the Curtain of Existence and die—or be born, I don't know which to call it.

Meantime he remains to me as one of the most illuminating allegories I have met.



## EDDIE THE BARTENDER

THERE he stands—or rather, there he used to stand—in his wicker sleeves, behind the tall mahogany, his hand on the lever of the beer pump—Eddie the Bartender.

Neat, grave, and courteous in the morning, was Eddie. "What's yours, sir?"

Slightly subdued in the drowsier hours of the afternoon, but courteous still. "What are you having, gentlemen?"

Cheerful, hospitable, and almost convivial in the evening. "What is it this time, boys?"

All things to all men, was Eddie, quiet with the quiet, affable with the affable, cheerful with the exhilarated and the gay; in himself nothing, a perfect reflection of his customer's own mind.

"Have one yourself, Ed," said the customer.

"Thanks, I'll take a cigar."

Eddie's waistcoat pockets, as day drew slowly on to evening, bristled with cigars like a fortress with cannon.

"Here, don't take a smoke, have a drink!" said the customer. "Thanks, I'll take a lemon sour. Here's luck." Lemon sours, sarsaparillas, and sickly beverages taken in little glassfuls, till the glassfuls ran into gallons—these were the price that Eddie paid for his abstemiousness.

"Don't you ever take anything, Ed?" asked the uninitiated. "I never use it," he answered.

But Eddie's principal office was that of a receptive listener, and, as such, always in agreement.

"Cold, ain't it?" said the customer.

"It sure is!" answered Eddie with a shiver.

"By Gosh, it's warm!" said another ten minutes later.

"Certainly a hot day," Ed murmured, quite faint with the heat.

Out of such gentle agreement is fabricated the structure of companionship.

"I'll bet you that John L. will lick Jim Corbett in one round!"

"I wouldn't be surprised," says Eddie.

"I'll bet you that this young Jim Corbett will trim John L. in five minutes!"

"Yes, I guess he might easily enough," says Eddie.

Out of this followed directly and naturally Eddie's function as arbitrator, umpire, and world's court.

"I'll leave it to Ed," calls the customer. "See here, Ed, didn't Maud S. hold the record at 2.35 before ever Jay Eye See ran at all? Ain't that so? I bet him a dollar and I says, 'I'll leave it to Ed,' says I."

That was the kind of question that Eddie had to arbitrate—technical, recondite, controversial. The chief editor of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* couldn't have touched it. And he had to do it with peace and good will on both sides, and make it end somehow with the interrogation, "What are you having, gentlemen?"

But Eddie was not only by profession a conversationalist, a companion, and a convivialist, he was also in his degree a medical man, prescribing for his patients.

This was chiefly in the busy early morning, when the bar first opened up for the day.

Eddie's "patients" lined up before him, asking for eye-openers, brain-clearers, head-removers.

Behind Eddie, on little shelves, was a regular pharmacopoeia; a phalanx of bottles—ticketed, labelled—some with marbles in the top stopper, some with little squirting tubes in the mouth. Out of these came bitters, sweets, flavours, peppers—things that would open the eyes, lift the hair, and renovate the whole man.

Eddie, shaking and mixing furiously, proceeded to open their eyes, clear up their brains, and remove their heads.

"I've got a head this morning, Ed. Fix me up something to take it away."

"Sure," said Eddie in return, "I'll fix it for you."

By 8 A.M. Eddie had them all straightened up and fixed. Some were even able to take a drink and start over.

This was in the early morning. But at other times, as for example, quite late at night, Ed appeared in another rôle—that of the champion strong man. Who would suspect the muscles of steel concealed behind Eddie's wicker cuffs and his soft white shirt-sleeves? Who could expect anger from a countenance so undisturbed, a nature so unruffled, a mind so little given to argument?

But wait! Listen to that fierce quarrel punctuated with unpunctuable language between two "bums" out on the barroom floor. Lo! at the height of it Eddie clears the mahogany counter in a single leap, seizes the two "bums" each by the collar, and with a short rush and a flying throw hurls them both out of the swinging doors bang on the sidewalk!

Anger? No, not that; inspired indignation is the proper phrase. Ed represented the insulted majesty of a peaceful public anxious only to be let alone.

"Don't make no trouble in here," was Eddie's phrase. There must be "no trouble" within the sacred precincts. Trouble was for the outside, for the sidewalk, for the open street, where "trouble" could lie breathing heavily in the gutter till a "cop" took it where it belonged.

Thus did Eddie, and his like, hurl "trouble" out into the street, and with it, had they only known it, hurled away their profession and their livelihood.

This was their downfall.

Thus on the sunshine of Eddie's tranquil life descended, shadow by shadow, the eclipse of prohibition.

Eddie watched its approach, nearer and nearer.

"What are you going to go at, Ed?" they asked.

"I've been thinking of going into chicken farming," Eddie used

to answer, as he swabbed off the bar. "They say there's good money in chickens."

Next week it was turkeys.

"A fellow was in here telling me about it," Ed said. "They say there's big money in turkeys."

After that it was a farm in Vermont, and then it was a ranch out in Kansas. But it was always something agricultural, bucolic, quiet.

Meanwhile Eddie stayed right there, pumping up the flooding beer and swabbing off the foam from the mahogany, till the days, the hours, and the minutes ticked out his livelihood.

Like the boy on the burning deck, he never left.

Where is he now? Eddie and all the other Eddies, the thousands of them? I don't know. There are different theories about them. Some people say they turned into divinity students and that they are out as canvassers selling Bibles to the farmers. You may still recognize them, it is claimed, by the gentle way in which they say, "What's yours this morning?"

There is no doubt their tranquil existence, sheltered behind the tall mahogany, unfitted them for the rough and tumble of ordinary life.

Perhaps, under prohibition, they took to drink. In the cities, even their habitat has gone. The corner saloon is now a soda fountain, where golden-headed blondes ladle out red and white sundaes and mushy chocolates and smash eggs into orange phosphates.

But out in the solitude of the country you may still see, here and there, boarded up in oblivion and obliquity, the frame building that was once the "tavern." No doubt at night, if it's late enough and dark enough, ghostly voices still whisper in the empty barroom, haunted by the spectres of the Eddies—"What's yours, gentlemen?"

## THE AWFUL FATE OF MELPOMENUS JONES

SOME people—not you nor I, because we are so awfully self-possessed—but some people, find great difficulty in saying good-bye when making a call or spending the evening. As the moment draws near when the visitor feels that he is fairly entitled to go away he rises and says abruptly, “Well, I think I . . .” Then the people say, “Oh, must you go now? Surely it’s early yet!” and a pitiful struggle ensues.

I think the saddest case of this kind of thing that I ever knew was that of my poor friend Melpomenus Jones, a curate—such a dear young man, and only twenty-three! He simply couldn’t get away from people. He was too modest to tell a lie, and too religious to wish to appear rude. Now it happened that he went to call on some friends of his on the very first afternoon of his summer vacation. The next six weeks were entirely his own—absolutely nothing to do. He chatted awhile, drank two cups of tea, then braced himself for the effort and said suddenly:

“Well, I think I . . .”

But the lady of the house said, “Oh, no! Mr. Jones, can’t you really stay a little longer?”

Jones was always truthful. “Oh, yes,” he said, “of course, I—er—can stay.”

“Then please don’t go.”

He stayed. He drank eleven cups of tea. Night was falling. He rose again.

“Well now,” he said shyly, “I think I really . . .”

“You must go?” said the lady politely. “I thought perhaps you could have stayed to dinner . . .”

“Oh, well, so I could, you know,” Jones said, “if . . .”

“Then please stay, I’m sure my husband will be delighted.”



"All right," he said feebly, "I'll stay," and he sank back into his chair, just full of tea, and miserable.

Papa came home. They had dinner. All through the meal Jones sat planning to leave at eight-thirty. All the family wondered whether Mr. Jones was stupid and sulky, or only stupid.

After dinner mamma undertook to "draw him out," and showed him photographs. She showed him all the family museum, several gross of them—photos of papa's uncle and his wife, and mamma's brother and his little boy, an awfully interesting photo of papa's uncle's friend in his Bengal uniform, an awfully well-taken photo of papa's grandfather's partner's dog, and an awfully wicked one of papa as the devil for a fancy-dress ball.

At eight-thirty Jones had examined seventy-one photographs. There were about sixty-nine more that he hadn't. Jones rose.

"I must say good night now," he pleaded.

"Say good night!" they said, "why, it's only half-past eight! Have you anything to do?"

"Nothing," he admitted, and muttered something about staying six weeks, and then laughed miserably.

Just then it turned out that the favourite child of the family, such a dear little romp, had hidden Mr. Jones's hat; so papa said that he must stay, and invited him to a pipe and a chat. Papa had the pipe and gave Jones the chat, and still he stayed. Every moment he meant to take the plunge, but couldn't. Then papa began to get very tired of Jones, and fidgeted and finally said, with jocular irony, that Jones had better stay all night, they could give him a shake-down. Jones mistook his meaning and thanked him with tears in his eyes, and papa put Jones to bed in the spare room and cursed him heartily.

After breakfast next day, papa went off to his work in the City, and left Jones playing with the baby, broken-hearted. His nerve was utterly gone. He was meaning to leave all day, but the thing had got on his mind and he simply couldn't. When papa came home in the evening he was surprised and chagrined to find Jones still there. He thought to jockey him out with a jest, and said he thought he'd have to charge him for his board, he! he! The unhappy young man stared wildly for a moment, then wrung papa's hand, paid him a month's board in advance, and broke down and sobbed like a child.

In the days that followed he was moody and unapproachable. He lived, of course, entirely in the drawing-room, and the lack of air and exercise began to tell sadly on his health. He passed his time in drinking tea and looking at the photographs. He would stand for hours gazing at the photographs of papa's uncle's friend in his Bengal uniform—talking to it, sometimes swearing bitterly at it. His mind was visibly failing.

At length the crash came. They carried him upstairs in a raging delirium of fever. The illness that followed was terrible. He recognized no one, not even papa's uncle's friend in his Bengal uniform. At times he would start up from his bed and shriek, "Well, I think I . . ." and then fall back upon the pillow with a horrible laugh. Then, again, he would leap up and cry, "Another cup of tea and more photographs! More photographs! Har! Har!"

At length, after a month of agony, on the last day of his vacation, he passed away. They say that when the last moment came, he sat up in bed with a beautiful smile of confidence playing upon his face, and said, "Well—the angels are calling me; I'm afraid I really must go now. Good afternoon."

And the rushing of his spirit from its prison-house was as rapid as a hunted cat passing over a garden fence.

## NUMBER FIFTY-SIX

WHAT I narrate was told me one winter's evening by my friend Ah-Yen in the little room behind his laundry. Ah-Yen is a quiet little celestial with a grave and thoughtful face, and that melancholy contemplative disposition so often noticed in his countrymen. Between myself and Ah-Yen there exists a friendship of some years' standing, and we spend many a long evening in the dimly lighted room behind his shop, smoking a dreamy pipe together and plunged in silent meditation. I am chiefly attracted to my friend by the highly imaginative cast of his mind, which is, I believe, a trait of the Eastern character and which enables him to forget to a great extent the sordid cares of his calling in an inner life of his own creation. Of the keen, analytical side of his mind, I was in entire ignorance until the evening of which I write.

The room where we sat was small and dingy, with but little furniture except our chairs and the little table at which we filled and arranged our pipes, and was lighted only by a tallow candle. There were a few pictures on the walls, for the most part rude prints cut from the columns of the daily press and pasted up to hide the bareness of the room. Only one picture was in any way noticeable, a portrait admirably executed in pen and ink. The face was that of a young man, a very beautiful face, but one of infinite sadness. I had long been aware, although I know not how, that Ah-Yen had met with a great sorrow, and had in some way connected the fact with this portrait. I had always refrained, however, from asking him about it, and it was not until the evening in question that I knew its history.

We had been smoking in silence for some time when Ah-Yen spoke. My friend is a man of culture and wide reading, and his English is consequently perfect in its construction; his speech is, of course, marked by the lingering liquid accent of his country which I will not attempt to reproduce.

"I see," he said, "that you have been examining the portrait of my unhappy friend, Fifty-Six. I have never yet told you of my bereavement, but as to-night is the anniversary of his death, I would fain speak of him for a while."

Ah-Yen paused; I lighted my pipe afresh, and nodded to him to show that I was listening.

"I do not know," he went on, "at what precise time Fifty-Six came into my life. I could indeed find it out by examining my books, but I have never troubled to do so. Naturally I took no more interest in him at first than in any other of my customers—less, perhaps, since he never in the course of our connection brought his clothes to me himself but always sent them by a boy. When I presently perceived that he was becoming one of my regular customers, I allotted to him his number, Fifty-Six, and began to speculate as to who and what he was. Before long I had reached several conclusions in regard to my unknown client. The quality of his linen showed me that, if not rich, he was at any rate fairly well off. I could see that he was a young man of regular Christian life, who went out into society to a certain extent; this I could tell from his sending the same number of articles to the laundry, from his washing always coming on Saturday night, and from the fact that he wore a dress shirt about once a week. In disposition he was a modest, unassuming fellow, for his collars were only two inches high."

I stared at Ah-Yen in some amazement, the recent publications of a favourite novelist had rendered me familiar with this process of analytical reasoning, but I was prepared for no such revelations from my Eastern friend.

"When I first knew him," Ah-Yen went on, "Fifty-Six was a student at the university. This, of course, I did not know for some time. I inferred it, however, in the course of time, from his absence from town during the four summer months, and from the fact that during the time of the university examinations the cuffs of his shirts came to me covered with dates, formulas, and propositions in geometry. I followed him with no little interest through his university career. During the four years which it lasted, I washed for him every week; my regular connection with him and the insight which my observation gave me into the lovable character of the man, deepened my first esteem into a profound affection and I became most anxious



for his success. I helped him at each succeeding examination, as far as lay in my power, by starching his shirts half-way to the elbow, so as to leave him as much room as possible for annotations. My anxiety during the strain of his final examination I will not attempt to describe. That Fifty-Six was undergoing the great crisis of his academic career, I could infer from the state of his handkerchiefs which, in apparent unconsciousness, he used as pen-wipers during the final test. His conduct throughout the examination bore witness to the moral development which had taken place in his character during his career as an undergraduate; for the notes upon his cuffs which had been so copious at his earlier examinations were limited now to a few hints, and these upon topics so intricate as to defy an ordinary memory. It was with a thrill of joy that I at last received in his laundry bundle one Saturday early in June, a ruffled dress shirt, the bosom of which was thickly spattered with the spillings of the wine-cup, and realized that Fifty-Six had banqueted as a Bachelor of Arts.

"In the following winter the habit of wiping his pen upon his handkerchief, which I had remarked during his final examination, became chronic with him, and I knew that he had entered upon the study of law. He worked hard during that year, and dress shirts almost disappeared from his weekly bundle. It was in the following winter, the second year of his legal studies, that the tragedy of his life began. I became aware that a change had come over his laundry, from one, or at most two a week, his dress shirts rose to four, and silk handkerchiefs began to replace his linen ones. It dawned upon me that Fifty-Six was abandoning the rigorous tenor of his student life and was going into society. I presently perceived something more; Fifty-Six was in love. It was soon impossible to doubt it. He was wearing seven shirts a week; linen handkerchiefs disappeared from his laundry; his collars rose from two inches to two and a quarter, and finally to two and a half. I have in my possession one of his laundry lists of that period; a glance at it will show the scrupulous care which he bestowed upon his person. Well do I remember the dawning hopes of those days, alternating with the gloomiest despair. Each Saturday I opened his bundle with a trembling eagerness to catch the first signs of a return of his love. I helped my friend in every way that I could. His shirts and collars were masterpieces of my art, though my hand often shook with agitation as I applied



the starch. She was a brave noble girl, that I knew; her influence was elevating the whole nature of Fifty-Six; until now he had had in his possession a certain number of detached cuffs and false shirt-fronts. These he discarded now—at first the false shirt-fronts, scorning the very idea of fraud, and after a time, in his enthusiasm, abandoning even the cuffs. I cannot look back upon those bright happy days of courtship without a sigh.

“The happiness of Fifty-Six seemed to enter into and fill my whole life. I lived but from Saturday to Saturday. The appearance of false shirt-fronts would cast me to the lowest depths of despair; their absence raised me to a pinnacle of hope. It was not till winter softened into spring that Fifty-Six nerved himself to learn his fate. One Saturday he sent me a new white waistcoat, a garment which had hitherto been shunned by his modest nature, to prepare for his use. I bestowed upon it all the resources of my art; I read his purpose in it. On the Saturday following it was returned to me and, with tears of joy, I marked where a warm little hand had rested fondly on the right shoulder, and knew that Fifty-Six was the accepted lover of his sweetheart.”

Ah-Yen paused and sat for some time silent; his pipe had sputtered out and lay cold in the hollow of his hand; his eye was fixed upon the wall where the light and shadows shifted in the dull flickering of the candle. At last he spoke again:

“I will not dwell upon the happy days that ensued—days of gaudy summer neckties and white waistcoats, of spotless shirts and lofty collars worn but a single day by the fastidious lover. Our happiness seemed complete and I asked no more from fate. Alas! it was not destined to continue! When the bright days of summer were fading into autumn, I was grieved to notice an occasional quarrel—only four shirts instead of seven, or the reappearance of the abandoned cuffs and shirt-fronts. Reconciliations followed, with tears of penitence upon the shoulder of the white waistcoat, and the seven shirts came back. But the quarrels grew more frequent and there came at times stormy scenes of passionate emotion that left a track of broken buttons down the waistcoat. The shirts went slowly down to three, then fell to two, and the collars of my unhappy friend subsided to an inch and three-quarters. In vain I lavished my utmost care upon Fifty-Six. It seemed to my tortured mind that the gloss upon his

shirts and collars would have melted a heart of stone. Alas! my every effort at reconciliation seemed to fail. An awful month passed; the false fronts and detached cuffs were all back again; the unhappy lover seemed to glory in their perfidy. At last, one gloomy evening, I found on opening his bundle that he had bought a stock of celluloids, and my heart told me that she had abandoned him for ever. Of what my poor friend suffered at this time, I can give you no idea; suffice it to say that he passed from celluloid to a blue flannel shirt and from blue to grey. The sight of a red cotton handkerchief in his wash at length warned me that his disappointed love had unhinged his mind, and I feared the worst. Then came an agonizing interval of three weeks during which he sent me nothing, and after that came the last parcel that I ever received from him—an enormous bundle that seemed to contain all his effects. In this, to my horror, I discovered one shirt the breast of which was stained a deep crimson with his blood, and pierced by a ragged hole that showed where a bullet had singed through into his heart.

“A fortnight before, I remembered having heard the street boys crying the news of an appalling suicide, and I know now that it must have been he. After the first shock of my grief had passed, I sought to keep him in my memory by drawing the portrait which hangs beside you. I have some skill in the art, and I feel assured that I have caught the expression of his face. The picture is, of course, an ideal one, for, as you know, I never saw Fifty-Six.”

The bell on the door of the outer shop tinkled at the entrance of a customer. Ah-Yen rose with that air of quiet resignation that habitually marked his demeanour, and remained for some time in the shop. When he returned he seemed in no mood to continue speaking of his lost friend. I left him soon after and walked sorrowfully home to my lodgings. On my way I mused much upon my little Eastern friend and the sympathetic grasp of his imagination. But a burden lay heavy on my heart—something I would fain have told him but which I could not bear to mention. I could not find it in my heart to shatter the airy castle of his fancy. For my life has been secluded and lonely and I have known no love like that of my ideal friend. Yet I have a haunting recollection of a certain huge bundle of washing that I sent to him about a year ago. I had been absent from town for three weeks and my laundry was much larger than

usual in consequence. And if I mistake not there was in the bundle a tattered shirt that had been grievously stained by the breaking of a bottle of red ink in my portmanteau, and burnt in one place where an ash fell from my cigar as I made up the bundle. Of all this I cannot feel absolutely certain, yet I know at least that until a year ago, when I transferred my custom to a more modern establishment, my laundry number with Ah-Yen was Fifty-Six.

## MY LOST DOLLAR

MY friend Todd owes me a dollar. He has owed it to me for twelve months, and I fear there is little prospect of his ever returning it. I can realize whenever I meet him that he has forgotten that he owes me a dollar. He meets me in the same frank friendly way as always. My dollar has clean gone out of his mind. I see that I shall never get it back.

On the other hand I know that I shall remember all my life that Todd owes me a dollar. It will make no difference, I trust, to our friendship, but I shall never be able to forget it. I don't know how it is with other people; but if any man borrows a dollar from me I carry the recollection of it to the grave.

Let me relate what happened. Todd borrowed this dollar last year on the 8th of April (I mention the date in case this should ever meet Todd's eye), just as he was about to leave for Bermuda. He needed a dollar in change to pay his taxi; and I lent it to him. It happened quite simply and naturally, I hardly realized it till it was all over. He merely said, "Let me have a dollar, will you!" And I said, "Certainly. Is a dollar enough?" I believe, in fact I *know*, that when Todd took that dollar he meant to pay for it.

He sent me a note from Hamilton, Bermuda. I thought when I opened it that the dollar would be in it. But it wasn't. He merely said that the temperature was up to nearly 100. The figure misled me for a moment.

Todd came back in three weeks. I met him at the train—not because of the dollar, but because I really esteem him. I felt it would be nice for him to see someone waiting for him on the platform after being away for three weeks. I said, "Let's take a taxi up to the Club." But he answered, "No, let's walk."

We spent the evening together, talking about Bermuda. I was thinking of the dollar but of course I didn't refer to it. One simply can't. I asked him what currency is used in Bermuda, and whether

the American Dollar goes at par. (I put a slight emphasis on *the* American Dollar), but found again that I could not bring myself to make any reference to it.

It took me some time (I see Todd practically every day at my Club) to realize that he had completely forgotten the dollar. I asked him one day what his trip cost him and he said that he kept no accounts. A little later I asked him if he felt settled down after his trip, and he said that he had practically forgotten about it. So I knew it was all over.

In all this I bear Todd no grudge. I have simply added him to the list of men who owe me a dollar and who have forgotten it. There are quite a few of them now. I make no difference in my demeanour to them, but I only wish that I could forget.

I meet Todd very frequently. Only two nights ago I met him out at dinner and he was talking, apparently without self-consciousness, about Poland. He said that Poland would never pay her debts. You'd think a thing like that would have reminded him, wouldn't you? But it didn't seem to.

But meantime a thought—a rather painful thought—has begun to come in to my mind at intervals. It is this. If Todd owes me a dollar and has forgotten it, it is possible—indeed it is theoretically probable—that there must be men to whom I owe a dollar which I have forgotten. There may be a list of them. The more I think of it the less I like it, because I am quite sure that if I had once forgotten a dollar, I should never pay it, on this side of the grave.

If there *are* such men I want them to speak out. Not all at once: but in reasonable numbers, and as far as may be in alphabetical order, and I will immediately write their names down on paper. I don't count here men who may have lent me an odd dollar over a bridge table: and I am not thinking (indeed I am taking care not to think) of the man who lent me thirty cents to pay for a bottle of plain soda in the Detroit Athletic Club last month. I always find that there's nothing like plain soda after a tiring ride across the Canadian frontier, and that man who advanced that thirty cents knows exactly why I felt that I had done enough for him. But if any man ever lent me a dollar to pay for a taxi when I was starting for Bermuda, I want to pay it.

More than that: I want to start a general movement, a *Back to*



*Honesty* movement, for paying all these odd dollars that are borrowed in moments of expansion. Let us remember that the greatest nations were built up on the rock basis of absolute honesty.

In conclusion may I say that I do particularly ask that no reader of this book will be careless enough to leave this copy round where it might be seen by Major Todd, of the University Club of Montreal.

## SIMPLE STORIES OF SUCCESS

LET me begin with a sort of parable.

Many years ago when I was on the staff of a great public school, we engaged a new swimming master.

He was the most successful man in that capacity that we had had for years.

Then one day it was discovered that he couldn't swim.

He was standing at the edge of the swimming tank explaining the breast stroke to the boys in the water.

He lost his balance and fell in. He was drowned.

Or no—he wasn't drowned—I remember—he was rescued by some of the pupils whom he had taught to swim.

After he was resuscitated by the boys—it was one of the things he had taught them—the school dismissed him.

Then some of the boys who were sorry for him taught him how to swim, and he got a new job as a swimming master in another place.

But this time he was an utter failure. He swam well, but they said he couldn't *teach*.

So his friends looked about to get him a new job. This was just at the time when the bicycle craze came in. They soon found the man a position as an instructor in bicycle riding. As he had never been on a bicycle in his life, he made an admirable teacher. He stood fast on the ground and said, "Now then, all you need is confidence."

Then one day he got afraid that he might be found out. So he went out to a quiet place and got on a bicycle, at the top of a slope, to learn to ride it. The bicycle ran away with him. But for the skill and daring of one of his pupils, who saw him and rode after him, he would have been killed.

This story, as the reader sees, is endless. Suffice it to say that the

man I speak of is now in an aviation school teaching people to fly. They say he is one of the best aviators that ever walked.

According to all the legends and story books, the principal factor in success is perseverance. Personally, I think there is nothing in it. If anything, the truth lies the other way.

There is an old motto that runs, "*If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.*" This is nonsense. It ought to read—"If at first you don't succeed, quit, quit at once."

If you can't do a thing, more or less, the first time you try, you will never do it. Try something else while there is yet time.

Let me illustrate this with a story.

I remember, long years ago, at a little school that I attended in the country, we had a schoolmaster, who used perpetually to write on the blackboard, in a copperplate hand, the motto that I have just quoted—

*"If at first you don't succeed,  
Try, try again."*

He wore plain clothes and had a hard, determined face. He was studying for some sort of preliminary medical examination, and was saving money for a medical course. Every now and then he went away to the city and tried the examination: and he always failed. Each time he came back, he would write up on the blackboard—

*"Try, try again."*

And always he looked grimmer and more determined than before. The strange thing was that with all his industry and determination, he would break out every now and then into drunkenness, and lie round the tavern at the crossroads, and the school would be shut for two days. Then he came back, more fiercely resolute than ever. Even children could see that the man's life was a fight. It was like the battle between Good and Evil in Milton's epics.

Well, after he had tried it four times, the schoolmaster at last passed the examination; and he went away to the city in a suit of store clothes, with eight hundred dollars that he had saved up, to study medicine. Now it happened that he had a brother who was not a bit like himself, but was a sort of ne'er-do-well, always hard-up and sponging on other people, and never working.

And when the schoolmaster came to the city and his brother knew that he had eight hundred dollars, he came to him and got him drinking and persuaded him to hand over the eight hundred dollars and to let him put it into the Louisiana State lottery. In those days the Louisiana Lottery had not yet been forbidden the use of the mails, and you could buy a ticket for anything from one dollar up. The Grand Prize was two hundred thousand dollars, and the Seconds were a hundred thousand each.

So the brother persuaded the schoolmaster to put the money in. He said he had a system for buying only the tickets with prime numbers, that won't divide by anything, and that it must win. He said it was a mathematical certainty, and he figured it out with the schoolmaster in the back room of a saloon, with a box of dominoes on the table to show the plan of it. He told the schoolmaster that he himself would only take ten per cent of what they made, as a commission for showing the system, and the schoolmaster could have the rest.

So in a mad moment, the schoolmaster handed over his roll of money, and that was the last he ever saw of it.

The next morning when he was up he was fierce with rage and remorse for what he had done. He could not go back to the school, and he had no money to go forward. So he stayed where he was in the little hotel where he had got drunk, and went on drinking. He looked so fierce and unkempt that in the hotel they were afraid of him, and the bartenders watched him out of the corners of their eyes wondering what he would do: because they knew that there was only one end possible, and they waited for it to come. And presently it came. One of the bartenders went up to the schoolmaster's room to bring up a letter, and he found him lying on the bed with his face grey as ashes, and his eyes looking up at the ceiling. He was stone dead. Life had beaten him.

And the strange thing was that the letter that the bartender carried up that morning was from the management of the Louisiana Lottery. It contained a draft on New York, signed by the treasurer of the State of Louisiana, for two hundred thousand dollars. The schoolmaster had won the Grand Prize.

The above story, I am afraid, is a little gloomy. I put it down merely for the moral it contained, and I became so absorbed in tell-

ing it that I almost forgot what the moral was that it was meant to convey. But I think the idea is that if the schoolmaster had long before abandoned the study of medicine, for which he was not fitted, and gone in, let us say, for playing the banjo, he might have become end-man in a minstrel show. Yes, that was it.

Let me pass on to other elements in success.

I suppose that anybody will admit that the peculiar quality that is called initiative—the ability to act promptly on one's own judgment—is a factor of the highest importance.

I have seen this illustrated two or three times in a very striking fashion.

I knew, in Toronto—it is long years ago—a singularly bright young man whose name was Robinson. He had had some training in the iron and steel business, and when I knew him was on the lookout for an opening.

I met him one day in a great hurry, with a valise in his hand.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"Over to England," he said. "There is a firm in Liverpool that have advertised that they want an agent here, and I'm going over to apply for the job."

"Can't you do it by letter?" I asked.

"That's just it," said Robinson, with a chuckle, "all the other men will apply by letter. I'll go right over myself and get there as soon or sooner than the letters. I'll be the man on the spot, and I'll get the job."

He was quite right. He went over to Liverpool, and was back in a fortnight with English clothes and a big salary.

But I cannot recommend his story to my friends. In fact, it should not be told too freely. It is apt to be dangerous.

I remember once telling this story of Robinson to a young man called Tomlinson, who was out of a job. Tomlinson had a head two sizes too big, and a face like a bun. He had lost three jobs in a bank and two in a broker's office, but he knew his work, and on paper he looked a good man.

I told him about Robinson, to encourage him, and the story made a great impression.

"Say, that was a great scheme, eh?" he kept repeating. He had no command of words, and always said the same thing over and over.



A few days later I met Tomlinson on the street with a valise in his hand.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"I'm off to Mexico," he answered. "They're advertising for a Canadian teller for a bank in Tuscapulco. I've sent my credentials down, and I'm going to follow them right up in person. In a thing like this, the personal element is everything."

So Tomlinson went down to Mexico and he travelled by sea to Mexico City, and then with a mule train to Tuscapulco. But the mails, with his credentials, went by land and got there two days ahead of him.

When Tomlinson got to Tuscapulco he went into the bank and he spoke to the junior manager and told him what he came for. "I'm awfully sorry," the junior manager said, "I'm afraid that this post has just been filled." Then he went into an inner room to talk with the manager. "The tellership that you wanted a Canadian for," he asked, "didn't you say that you have a man already?"

"Yes," said the manager, "a brilliant young fellow from Toronto; his name is Tomlinson, I have his credentials here—a first class man. I've wired him to come right along, at our expense, and we'll keep the job open for him ten days."

"There's a young man outside," said the junior, "who wants to apply for the job."

"Outside?" exclaimed the manager. "How did he get here?"

"Came in on the mule train this morning: says he can do the work and wants the job."

"What's he like?" asked the manager.

The junior shook his head. "Pretty dusty-looking customer," he said; "shifty-looking."

"Same old story," murmured the manager. "It's odd how these fellows drift down here, isn't it? Up to something crooked at home, I suppose. Understands the working of a bank, eh? I guess he understands it a little too well for my taste. No, no," he continued, tapping the papers that lay on the table, "now that we've got a first class man like Tomlinson, let's hang on to him. We can easily wait ten days, and the cost of the journey is nothing to the bank as compared with getting a man of Tomlinson's stamp. And, by the way, you might telephone to the Chief of Police and get him to see to

it that this loafer gets out of town straight off."

So the Chief of Police shut up Tomlinson in the calaboose and then sent him down to Mexico City under a guard. By the time the police were done with him he was dead broke, and it took him four months to get back to Toronto; when he got there, the place in Mexico had been filled long ago.

But I can imagine that some of my readers might suggest that I have hitherto been dealing only with success in a very limited way, and that more interest would lie in discussing how the really great fortunes are made.

Everybody feels an instinctive interest in knowing how our great captains of industry, our financiers and railroad magnates made their money.

Here the explanation is really a very simple one. There is, in fact, only one way to amass a huge fortune in business or railway management. One must begin at the bottom. One must mount the ladder from the lowest rung. But this lowest rung is everything. Any man who can stand upon it with his foot well poised, his head erect, his arms braced and his eye directed upward, will inevitably mount to the top.

But after all—I say this as a kind of afterthought in conclusion. Why bother with success at all? I have observed that the successful people get very little real enjoyment out of life. In fact the contrary is true. If I had to choose—with an eye to having a really pleasant life—between success and ruin, I should prefer ruin every time. I have several friends who are completely ruined—some two or three times—in a large way of course; and I find that if I want to get a really good dinner, where the champagne is just as it ought to be, and where hospitality is unhindered by mean thoughts of expense, I can get it best at the house of a ruined man.

## WHEN MEN RETIRE

MY old friend Mr. McPherson retired from the flour and feed business—oh, quite a few years ago. He said it was time to get out and give young Charlie a chance—even then “young Charlie” was getting near fifty. Anyway old Mr. McPherson said he wasn’t going to keep his nose to the grindstone for ever.

I don’t mean that he absolutely dropped out of the business; but, as he himself said, he took it easy. The McPhersons had a fine business, two or three big mills and a central office in our home town. Always, before he retired, Mr. McPherson would be down at the office sharp at eight—the flour and feed is an early business. When he retired he gave all that up. He’d loaf in anywhere round ten minutes past, or sometimes even twenty. It was the same way after lunch—or at least I mean after “dinner”; they don’t have “lunch” in the flour and feed business; they have dinner at noon. After dinner if Mr. McPherson didn’t feel like getting up and walking to the office at one o’clock, he’d drive down in a cab. And at five o’clock, when the office closed, if he didn’t feel like going home right away, he’d stay for a while and run over some of the day’s invoices. Or perhaps, if he felt like it, he’d go over to the mill, because the mill didn’t close till six, and just fool around there a while helping the men bag up some of the farmers’ orders.

One thing, though, that Mr. McPherson insists on, now that he’s retired, is that, as he himself says, he never interferes. The business, as he explains, belongs now to the children. That means young Charlie and Lavinia—bless me! Lavinia must be not far from sixty; she keeps the house. To those two and a married daughter in Scotland. The old man has never transferred the business in any legal sense. He says it isn’t necessary as long as he’s alive. But it’s *theirs* just the same, and he tells them so. And, as I say, he doesn’t interfere; “young Charlie” is the general manager, and all his father does is just to look over the contracts to see what’s doing, and keep an

eye on the produce market to advise young Charlie when to buy—but only, mind you, to advise.

What's more, as Mr. McPherson himself loves to explain, he's not like a man who can't cut loose from business and enjoy himself. Oh, my no! Every year there's the St. Andrews dinner in the Odd Fellows' Hall, regular as clock-work, and every year Burns' birthday, when a few of them get together and have a big old time and read Burns out loud. And only four years ago Mr. McPherson took a trip to Scotland and saw his married daughter and Burns' grave and the big flour mills at Dumbarton, and paid for it all out of a commission on No. 1 wheat. Oh, no, Mr. McPherson says he never regrets his retirement: he can't think what it would be like to be back in harness.

My friend McAlpin was a banker—assistant general manager of a bank. He retired in the natural, normal course of things in accordance with the bank regulations. He made no plan or preparation for retirement. He said that it was enough for him to be rid of the strain of work. He'd have his mind free. So he would have had, if it hadn't happened that, on his first morning of retirement, as he walked down town, he felt a sort of wheeziness, a kind of, well, not exactly a pain, but a sort of compression. Anyway, a druggist gave him some bicarbonate of bismuth—he's told me about it himself ever so many times—or was it bisulphate of something? Anyway it fixed McAlpin up all right but it left him with a sort of feeling of flatulence, or flobbulence (he's explained it to me) that bothered him all morning till a friend told him to drink Vichy water, two or three quarts at a time. Now as a matter of fact you see McAlpin had had that wheeziness every morning for years back when he went to the bank. But as soon as he opened the mail and began dictating, the wheeziness vanished, and the flobbulence never started. But the moment he retired, the wheeziness brought on the flobbulence; and Vichy water is all right, but there's so much chalk in it that if you take it you must follow it with an anticalcide of some sort. I don't know the names, but McAlpin has told me about them—bigusphate of carbon or any other antiscorbutic.

In fact, as McAlpin tells me, he has come to realize that his diet while he was in the bank was all wrong. He used to take bacon and



eggs for breakfast, whereas now that he has looked into things he finds that bacon has no food value at all—contains no postulates. Eggs would be all right if taken with a germicide, but they lack vitamins. So what McAlpin eats now—he tells me this himself—is a proper balance of protein and carbohydrates.

McAlpin spends a good deal of his time in the drug stores. He says those fellows know a lot. Do you realize that if you take a drink of mineral water every half hour, with a touch of salt in it, it keeps your sebaceous glands open?

When McAlpin takes a holiday he goes down to Nugget Springs where the thermal baths are. It's a new place and he says that they say that the doctors say that the water has a lower alkali content than any other. That's why he goes there, for the low alkali content. You take a bath every hour and in between you drink the water and the rest of the time you sit in it. McAlpin says that when he comes back he feels a hundred per cent more crustaceous than he did before. He attributes this to phosphorus.

My friend Tharpe, who was in Iron and Steel, retired to Paris. He retired at fifty-eight. He said he wanted to retire while he was still fresh enough to enjoy life—feel those muscles. He wanted to have a little fun in life, before he sank into old age. So he went over to Paris to have, as he himself so fervently put it, “a whale of a time.”

I saw him there six months later, in a night-supper restaurant. He had with him something that looked like an odelisk—isn't that the word?—anyway, something Moorish with slanting eyes and a crescent diadem. Tharpe came over and spoke to me. He looked like a boiled lobster, all red and black. He said he felt fine. He said he was just starting out for the evening. He felt, he said, A.1.

I saw him in the hotel next morning. He was in the barber shop. The barber was fixing him up. He looked about four colours, mostly black and yellow. He said he felt great. The barber was steaming him, boiling him and squirting things over him. Then he went up to the drug store and the druggist “fixed him”—washed him right out—and then into the bar and the bartender “fixed him”—toned him right up with a couple of “eye-openers.” Then he started off. He had on a pongee suit and a panama hat and a French silk tie,



and he looked pretty slick, but battered. He said he felt fine. He said he was going out to play baccarat with two men he met the night before—Russians—he couldn't remember their names—Sonovitch or Dombroski or something. Anyway one of them was a cousin of the Czar. He said he felt elegant.

Tharpe is in a home just now, in England—a rest home. He's taking the rest cure, and then he is to take the gold cure and after that a brain cure. A big English doctor took out part of his skull. He says he feels A.1. He has lost most of his money and he's coming back to the Iron and Steel business. He says it beats Paris.

A peculiarly interesting case of retirement has been that of my long-time friend the Senior Professor of Greek at the college here. When he retired the Chancellor of the University said at the Convocation that our regret at Professor Dim's retirement was tempered by the fact that we realized that he would now be able to complete the studies on Homer's *Odyssey* which had occupied him for so many years. Notice, to *complete*. The general supposition was that in all these long years, in all the evenings of his spare time he'd been working on Homer's *Odyssey*, and that now all that he needed was a little time and breathing space and the brilliant studies would be consolidated into a book. To *complete*—and I was the only one who knew that he hadn't even started. He had begun, ever so many years ago, when we were fellow juniors, talking of Homer's *Odyssey*. There was something he wanted to do about it—I forget just what; either to prove that there was never any Homer or that there was never any *Odyssey*. At any rate it was one of those big academic problems that professors select as a life work. It began to be understood that he was "working on Homer's *Odyssey*"; then that he was doing a book on Homer's *Odyssey*, and then that he had nearly done it, and only needed time to *complete* it. And all the time he hadn't started. Professors are like that.

The years go by so easily—Commencement Day and a new session—you can't begin anything then—mid-session, impossible—final exams and the end of the session—out of the question to start anything then; a man must rest sometime. And you don't start Homer in the long vacation on the coast of Maine.

So when Professor Dim retired, people on the street would stop him and ask, "How's the book coming on?" And he could only turn pink and gurgle something. I'm the only one who knows that he hasn't started it. He's been getting pretty frail the last two winters; some of his old pupils sent him south last winter, so that he could finish his book. He didn't. They gave him a trip up north last summer—but not far enough. They talk now of sending him to Greece where the *Odyssey* began. They're afraid, some of them—this, of course, they say very gently and kindly—they're afraid that the old fellow may not live to finish the book. I know that he won't. He hasn't started.

But as to this retirement business, let me give a word of advice to all of you young fellows round fifty. Some of you have been talking of it and even looking forward to it. Have nothing to do with it. Listen; it's like this. Have you ever been out for a late autumn walk in the closing part of the afternoon, and suddenly looked up to realize that the leaves have practically all gone? You hadn't realized it. And you notice that the sun has set already, the day gone before you knew it—and with that a cold wind blows across the landscape. That's retirement.

## MY TAILOR

HE always stands there—and has stood these thirty years—in the back part of his shop, his tape woven about his neck, a smile of welcome on his face, waiting to greet me.

“Something in a serge?” he says, “or perhaps in a tweed?”

There are only these two choices open to us. We have had no others for thirty years. It is too late to alter now.

“A serge, yes,” continues my tailor, “something in a dark blue, perhaps.”

He says it with all the gusto of a new idea, as if the thought of dark blue had sprung up as an inspiration—“a dark blue—Mr. Jennings” (this is his assistant), “kindly take down some of those dark blues.”

“Ah!” he exclaims, “now here is an excellent thing.” His manner as he says this is such as to suggest that by sheer good fortune and blind chance he has stumbled upon a thing among a million.

He lifts one knee and drapes the cloth over it, standing upon one leg. He knows that in this attitude it is hard to resist him. Cloth to be appreciated as cloth must be viewed over the bended knee of a tailor with one leg in the air.

My tailor can stand in this way indefinitely, on one leg in a sort of ecstasy, a kind of local paralysis.

“Would that make up well?” I ask him.

“Admirably,” he answers.

I have no real reason to doubt it. I have never seen any reason why cloth should not make up well. But I always ask the question as I know that he expects it and it pleases him. There ought to be a fair give and take in such things.

“You don’t think it at all loud?” I say. He always likes to be asked this.

“Oh, no, very quiet indeed. In fact we always recommend serge as extremely quiet.”

I have never had a wild suit in my life. But it is well to ask.

Then he measures me—round the chest, nowhere else. All the other measures were taken years ago. Even the chest measure is only done—and I know it—to please me. I do not really grow.

"A *little* fuller in the chest," my tailor muses. Then he turns to his assistant. "Mr. Jennings, a little fuller in the chest—half an inch on to the chest, please."

It is a kind fiction. Growth around the chest is flattering even to the humblest of us.

"Yes," my tailor goes on—he uses "yes" without any special meaning, "yes, and shall we say a week from Tuesday? Mr. Jennings, a week from Tuesday, please."

"And will you please," I say, "send the bill to—" but my tailor waves this aside. He does not care to talk about the bill. It would only give pain to both of us to speak of it.

The bill is a matter we deal with solely by correspondence, and that only in a decorous and refined style never calculated to hurt.

I am sure from the tone of my tailor's letters that he would never send the bill, or ask for the amount, were it not that from time to time he is himself, unfortunately, "pressed" owing to "large consignments from Europe." But for these heavy consignments, I am sure I should never need to pay him. It is true that I have sometimes thought to observe that these consignments are apt to arrive when I pass the limit of owing for two suits and order a third. But this can only be a mere coincidence.

Yet the bill, as I say, is a thing that we never speak of. Instead of it my tailor passes to the weather. Ordinary people always begin with this topic. Tailors, I notice, end with it. It is only broached after the suit is ordered, never before.

"Pleasant weather we are having," he says. It is never other, so I notice, with him. Perhaps the order of a suit itself is a little beam of sunshine.

Then we move together towards the front of the store on the way to the outer door.

"Nothing to-day, I suppose," says my tailor, "in shirtings?"

"No, thank you."

This is again a mere form. In thirty years I have never bought any shirtings from him. Yet he asks the question with the same win-

someness as he did thirty years ago.

"And nothing, I suppose, in collaring or in hosiery?"

This again is futile. Collars I buy elsewhere and hosiery I have never worn.

Thus we walk to the door, in friendly colloquy. Somehow if he failed to speak of shirtings and of hosiery, I should feel as if a familiar cord had broken.

At the door we part.

"Good afternoon," he says—"a week from Tuesday—yes—good afternoon."

Such is—or was—our calm unsullied intercourse, unvaried or at least broken only by consignments from Europe.

I say it *was*, that is until just the other day.

And then, coming to the familiar door, for my customary summer suit, I found that he was there no more. There were people in the store, unloading shelves and piling cloth and taking stock. And they told me that he was dead. It came to me with a strange shock. I had not thought it possible. He seemed—he should have been—immortal.

They said the worry of his business had helped to kill him. I could not have believed it. It always seemed so still and tranquil—weaving his tape about his neck and marking measures and holding cloth against his leg beside the sunlight of the window in the back part of the shop. Can a man die of that? Yet he had been "going behind," they said (however that is done), for years. His wife, they told me, would be left badly off. I had never conceived him as having a wife. But it seemed that he had, and a daughter, too—at a conservatory of music—(yet he never spoke of her)—and that he himself was musical and played the flute, and was the sidesman of a church—yet he never referred to it to me. In fact, in thirty years we never spoke of religion. It was hard to connect him with the idea of it.

As I went out I seemed to hear his voice still saying, "and nothing to-day in shirtings?"

I was sorry I had never bought any.

There is, I am certain, a deep moral in this. But I will not try to draw it. It might appear too obvious.



# DRAMA



## CAST UP BY THE SEA

*A Sea Coast Melodrama (As Thrown up for 30 cents)—  
Period, 1880*

EVERYBODY who has reached or passed middle age looks back with affection to that splendid old melodrama *Cast Up by the Sea*. Perhaps it wasn't called exactly that. It may have been named *Called Back from the Dead*, or *Broken Up by the Wind*, or *Buried Alive in the Snow*, or anything of the sort. In fact I believe it was played under about forty different names in fifty different forms. But it was always the same good old melodrama of the New England Coast, with the farmhouse and the yellow fields running down to the sea, and the lighthouse right at the end of the farm with the rocks and the sea beyond, looking for trouble.

Before the cinematograph had addled the human brain and the radio broadcast had disintegrated the human mind, you could go and see *Cast Up by the Sea* any Saturday afternoon in any great American City for thirty cents; you got a thrill from it that lasted twenty years. For thirty cents you had an orchestra chair on the ground floor where you could sit and eat peanuts and study the programme till the play began. After it had begun you couldn't eat any more; you were too excited.

The first thing everybody used to do in studying the programme was to see how many years elapsed between the acts; because in those days everybody used to find it wiser to go out between the acts—for air. And the more years that elapsed and the more acts there were, the more air they could get. Some of the plays used to have ten acts and the people got out nine times. Nowadays this is all changed. People talk now of the unity of the drama, and in some of the plays to-day there is a deliberate announcement on the programme that reads "Between Acts II and III the curtain will be merely lowered

and raised again." We wouldn't have stood for that in 1880. We needed our two years between the acts. We had a use for it.

As I say, it was necessary to study the programme. Nobody had yet invented that system of marking the characters "in the order of their appearance." You had to try and learn up the whole lot before the play began. You couldn't really. But you began conscientiously enough. Hiram Haycroft, a farmer; Martha, his wife; Hope, their daughter; Phoebe, a girl help; Zeke, a hired man—Rube also a hired man—and by that time you had just forgotten the farmer's own name and looked back for it when just then—

Up went the curtain with a long stately roll, two men at the side hoisting it, and there you were looking at the farmstead by the sea.

Notice how quick and easy and attractive that old fashioned beginning was. One minute you were eating peanuts and studying the programme and the next minute the play had begun. There was none of that agonizing stuff that precedes the moving pictures of to-day: No "*Authorized by the Board of Census of the State of New York.*" The world, even New York State, was so good in 1880 that it had never heard of a censor. Nor was there any announcement of something else altogether heralded as "*A Great Big Compelling Life Drama—Next Week.*"

If the moving picture people could have been in control (forty years before their time) they would have announced the farm and lighthouse play with a written panegyric on what they were going to show—"a gripping heart-drama in which the foam of the sea and the eerie of the spindrift carry to the heart a tale of true love battled by the wind next Thursday."

But if they had worked that stuff on an audience of 1880 it would have gone out and taken another drink, and never come back until next Thursday.

So the play began at once. There was the farmhouse, or at least the porch and door, at the right hand side of the stage, all bathed in sunlight (yellow gas) and the grass plot and the road in the centre, and the yellow wheat (quite a little bunch of it) at the left, and the fields reaching back till they hit the painted curtain with the lighthouse and the rocks and the sea.

Everybody who looked at that painted curtain and saw that lighthouse knew it wasn't there for nothing. There'd be something doing

from that all right, and when they looked back at the programme and saw that Act IV was marked *In the Lighthouse Tower—Midnight*, they got the kind of a thrill that you can never get by a mere announcement that there is going to be a “gripping heart-drama next Tu., Thurs., and Sat.”

Surely enough there would be something doing with that lighthouse. Either the heroine thrown off it or the hero thrown over it—anyway something good.

But for the moment all is peace and sunlight, on the seashore farm. There is no one on the stage but two men on the left, evidently Zeke and Rube, the hired men. They’ve got scythes and they are cutting the little patch of wheat over at the edge of the stage. Just imagine it, *real* wheat, they’re actually cutting it! Upon my word those stage effects of 1880 were simply wonderful. I do wish that “Doug” Fairbanks and those fellows who work so hard to give us thrills could realize what we used to get in 1880 by seeing Zeke and Rube cutting real wheat on the left hand side of the stage.

Then they speak. You can’t really hear what they say—but it sounds like this:

Zeke says, “I swan b’gosh heck b’gosh gum yak! yak!”

And Rube answers: “Heck gosh b’gum, yes, yak! yak!”

And they both laugh.

These words probably have a meaning, but you don’t need it. The people are still moving into their seats and this is just the opening of the play. It’s a mere symbol. It stands for New England dialect, farm life, and honesty of character. Presently Rube gets articulate. He quits reaping and he says:

“So Miss Hope’ll be coming back this morning.”

“Yes, sir, that she will. A whole year now it’ll be that she’s been to boarding school.”

And Rube says:

“Yup, a whole yer come Gurdlemas.”

Rube and Zeke have a calendar all their own.

“She’ll be a growd up lady now all right.”

“Yes, sir, and as purty as a pitcher, I’ll be bound, by heck.”

They whet their scythes with a clang and out comes Martha, the farmer’s wife, and Phoebe, the help, from the porch on the right. With them comes a freckled boy, evidently the younger son of the



farm family. This freckled boy is in all the melodramas. It is his business to get his ears boxed, mislay the will, lose the mortgage, forget to post the letters and otherwise mix up the plot.

"Do you see the buggy yet, Rube? Can you see them coming yet, Zeke?"

Zeke and Rube hop about making gestures of looking down the road, their hands up over their eyes.

"Not yet, Missus, but they'll be along right soon now."

"There they are," calls Phoebe, "coming along down in the hollow."

There is great excitement at once. Martha cries, "Land's sake, if it ain't Hope all right," and boxes the freckled boy's ears. The others run to and fro saying, "Here they come!" so as to get the audience worked up with excitement, at the height of which there comes the actual clatter of the horse's hoofs and the next moment a horse and buggy, a real horse and buggy, drive on to the stage. That clattering horse coming on to the stage was always one of the great effects in 1880—a real horse with real harness and with added anxiety for fear that the horse would misbehave himself when he came on.

The buggy stops with a lot of shouting of "Whoa there"—intended to keep the horse lively. If they didn't shout at it this stage horse was apt to subside into a passive melancholy not suited for the drama.

So here is the farmer sitting in the buggy in a suit of store clothes and a black slouch hat, and beside him is Hope, his daughter, just home from boarding school. How sweet and fresh she looks in her New England sun hat with the flowers on it. I don't know what they did to the girls in the boarding schools in 1880—some line of algebra perhaps—to make them look so fresh. There are none like them now.

Hope leaps out in one spring and kisses her mother in one bound and she cries, "Well, Mother! Well, Phoebe! Why, Zeke! Why, Rube!" They all circulate and hop and dance about saying, "Well, Miss Hope, well, I never!" And all the while there's the sunshine in the yellow fields and the red hollyhocks beside the porch, and light and happiness everywhere.

You'd think, would you not, that that old homestead represented the high water mark of happiness? And so it does. But wait a bit.

Before long they'll start trouble enough. All the audience know in advance that that farm will be mortgaged and the farmer ruined and Hope driven from home—oh, there's lots of trouble coming. Trouble was the proper business of the melodrama. So presently they all get through their congratulations and Hope has embraced everybody, and the farmer's wife has got off two jokes about the size of Boston and then the freckled boy wants to take Hope away to see the brindle cow, and they all fade away off the stage except the farmer and his wife.

And right away the whole tone of the play changes, just like that. The farmer stands alone with his wife.

And Martha comes over to him and puts her hand timidly on his shoulder. The joy has gone out of her face.

"Hiram," she says, "Lawyer Ellwood's agent was here this morning."

The farmer fairly humps into his shoulders with anger.

"Ay," he snarls.

"And, Hiram, Lawyer Ellwood wants his money."

"Ay! he wants his money, does he? Curse him!"

The farmer's fist is clenched and there's a scowl on his face.

"He says, Hiram, that it's got to be paid to-morrow. Oh, Hiram, we can't never pay it."

Martha puts her apron up to her face and sobs.

The farmer turns and shakes his clenched fist at the scenery away off to the left.

"Curse him!" he rages. "Ay, curse him. This three years he has thrown a blight across our life."

"You was friends oncet, Hiram," sobs Martha again, "years ago before he went to the city you was friends."

"Friends!" raves the farmer, "a fine friend, drawing me on with his schemes of money and profit. 'To make my fortune,' he said—a fine fortune—ruin, ruin it meant—till I had signed this and signed that, till it was all mortgaged away and till he held me, as he thought, in the hollow of his hand. Martha, if that man stood before me now, by the God that lives, I could choke him with these hands."

Hiram makes a gesture so terrible and yet so passionate that the one hope of the audience in the top gallery is that Lawyer Ellwood will happen along right now and get choked.

Martha tries to dry her eyes.

"Nay, Hiram, you mustn't talk like that. Those are evil thoughts. It is God's will, Hiram, and it must be right. But we can't never pay."

"Not pay," shouts Hiram, "who says I can't pay? I *can* pay and when that man comes to-morrow I can throw the money in his face. Look, Martha, there it is!"

Hiram Haycroft draws a great wallet from his pocket and slaps it down on the palm of his hand.

"Two thousand dollars, every cent of his accursed debt. Martha, it will mean poverty and hard times for us where all was plenty, but, thank God! it can be paid."

"Why, Hiram!"

"I've raised it, Martha. I've sold the stock, I've parted with this and I've pledged that—everything but the roof above our heads is sold or pledged. But this accursed mortgage can be paid."

"Oh, Hiram!"

"It will mean hard times again, hard and bitter times—"

"I don't mind that, Hiram"—and Martha puts her hands up to her husband's neck—"we've borne it together before and we can bear it together again— But oh, Hiram, if only our boy Jack had been spared to us, I could have borne it so easily then."

Martha begins to cry.

"There, there, Martha," says the farmer, "you mustn't lay it so to heart. The sea has taken him, Mother, as it has taken many a brave lad before him—"

"The sea, the sea—" groans Martha, "I see it there so bright and calm in the sunlight. But will it give me back my boy? Three years this day, Hiram, since he left us. I can feel his good-bye kiss still on my cheek. And since then no word, never a word."

Hiram draws his wife to him to comfort her.

"Come, Mother, come into the house; we mustn't show sad faces for Hope's home coming—come—"

They go in through the wooden porch under the flowers on the right, leaving the audience sad and disturbed. That infernal lawyer! But they were all alike in 1880. Show them a sun-lit farm and a happy family and they clap a mortgage on it at sight. And to think that farmer Haycroft and his wife had lost their only son at sea—

that calm blue sea in the back curtain with the sunlight on it.

In fact the play is getting too sad; so it has to be relieved and Rube and Phoebe are brought on to the stage again and go through one of those rural love scenes that were used to ease the strain of the melodrama. Rube shambles over to her in a sheepish way, evidently proposing to kiss her, and says:

"Ain't you got nothing for me this morning, Phoebe?"

And Phoebe says:

"Go along, you big thing, I've got *that* for you," and swats him over the face with a thistle. The audience roar with laughter, the strain is removed and they're ready to get on with the play when Phoebe disappears with Rube in pursuit.

"Why, Mother"—it is Hope calling—"where are you, Mother?"

"I'm here, daughter," says Martha, reappearing out of the porch.

"I was looking for you all over, Mother," says Hope, coming over to her coyly. "I have been wanting so much to talk to you all by ourselves."

"Ah! And I think I can guess something of what that's about." Martha has taken Hope's hand in hers and is patting it and Hope is looking at the ground and swinging herself about on one heel in a way that in a New England play always symbolized the approach of love.

"—and now, Hope, tell me all about it," said the farmer's wife.

"You remember, Mother, that I wrote and told you that I had a secret—"

"Yes, dearie, a *great* secret, you said—"

"—a secret that I didn't want to put on paper and didn't want to tell to anybody till I could tell it to you first, Mother dear."

Hope has snuggled up close to her mother, who is patting her on the shoulder and repeating, "Ay, lass, a great secret, and I'll be bound I can guess a little of what it is—I suppose it means that there is someone—that my little girl—"

She whispers into Hope's ear.

"Oh, Mother," Hope goes on, "it's even greater than that. Look, Mother, see what's on my hand."

Hope holds out her hand, her face downcast and not only her mother but even the girls in the gallery can see the plain gold ring that's on her finger. The men in the audience don't get it, but the



girls and women explain to them what it is.

"Why, Hope, darling," says Martha, all in a tremble, "what does it mean?"

"Why, Mother, it means—it means," Hope takes a flying leap into her mother's arms—"it means, Mother, that I'm married."

"Married!"

"Yes, married, Mother, last Saturday in Boston at eleven o'clock in the morning."

"Married, my little girl married!"

Martha has to be terribly astonished so as to keep the audience in the same frame of mind: not at Hope being married the very day she left her finishing school. That was nothing. That was a favourite way of getting married in 1880—but at the fact that she hadn't told her mother about it. So Martha keeps repeating . . .

"Married! My little girl married!"

"It was all in such a hurry, Mother—I couldn't tell you. It all came so sudden—"

Hope is half crying, half smiling.

"But I shouldn't cry, Mother, because really I'm so happy—"

"That's right, darling, and now tell me all about it."

"We were married in Boston last Saturday, Mother. And, oh, I did so want you to be there, only it couldn't be. It was all in such a hurry—because Ned was offered a new ship—just think, Mother, captain of a ship at twenty-one."

"Not a sailor, dearie," says Martha Haycroft in evident agitation, "don't tell me that your man is a sailor."

"Why, yes, Mother, Ned's been at sea ever since he was fifteen."

"The sea, the sea," groans the farmer's wife. "I see it flying there in the sunlight. I hear it roaring in the winter wind. When will it give me back my boy?"

"Mother, you mustn't cry. It was years ago and it was God's will, and, Mother, Ned will only be at sea a little while longer now—just this one voyage in his new ship, and listen, Mother, Ned's new ship (it's a schooner, Mother, and it's Ned's father who owns it and it's called the *Good Hope*, after me)—will be off the coast here this evening, and if Ned can manage it he'll come ashore and see us all, and his father—though I've never seen *him*—will be with Ned. And Ned is to settle down and be a farmer, Mother, on a farm beside the



sea. His father is a rich lawyer in Boston, Mother, and Ned says that his father has a mortgage on a farm right on the seashore just like this, and after this one voyage—”

“A lawyer, a rich lawyer!”

“Yes, Mother, a rich lawyer in Boston, but he once lived in the country, near here I think, years ago.”

“His name? What name?”

“Ellwood, Mother, Lawyer Ephraim Ellwood.”

Martha breaks from her daughter in alarm.

“No, no, not that, don’t say it’s that name—Hope, it couldn’t be, it can’t be.”

And at that moment the farmer, Hiram Haycroft, steps on to the stage.

“Why, Mother! Why, Hope! What’s—what’s all this?”

Hope (tearfully)—“I don’t know, Father; I only began to tell Mother a secret—”

“Yes, daughter!”

“That I—that we—that I am married, Father.”

“Married, my little girl married! That don’t seem possible. But what’s all this ado about, Mother, and who’s the lucky man that’s gone and taken my little girl?”

Hiram comes over affectionately and takes Hope’s two hands.

“Only yesterday, it seems,” he says, “that I held you on my knees, little gal, and now to be married.”

All the audience waits in a luxury of expectation. They know that the farmer is going to get an awful jolt.

Then he gets it.

“He’s the son of a rich Boston lawyer, Father, who—has a mortgage on a farm—”

The farmer has dropped Hope’s hands, his face is darkening.

“And Ned is to have the farm—Ned Ellwood is his name, Father, see it here.”

Hope timidly takes out a paper from her dress.

“Here on my marriage certificate.”

But the farmer doesn’t hear her. He stands a moment, his fists clenched, then bursts into wild rage.

“Ellwood, Lawyer Ellwood. My daughter marry a son of that man! By the living God, Hope, sooner than see you married to a son of

his, I'd see you lying fathoms deep under the sea beside my son. God hears me say it, and may God so order it!"

And as Hiram Haycroft stands, with this fateful invocation on his lips, the freckled boy runs on the stage and says:

"Say, Hope, ain't you never coming to see that brindle cow?"

And with that the curtain slowly falls, and Act I is over.

No wonder that as the curtain falls there's a terrible feeling of sadness and apprehension all over the audience. No wonder that even before the curtain has reached the floor a great many of the men in that 1880 audience have risen and are walking up the aisles to get out of the theatre. They can't stand the strain of it—the thought of the beautiful old New England homestead all brought to sorrow and tragedy like this. It's too much for them. They must have air. They've gone to look for it outside the theatre. Even though the playbill says that only ten hours elapse between Act I and II (pretty rapid work for 1880) they're taking a chance on it.

So the able-bodied men in the audience go out leaving behind only the young, the infirm, and the women (women never took anything to drink, anyway, before prohibition). There is a great sadness over the audience now because they know by experience that once the old homestead starts going to pieces like this things will go from bad to worse. Even the fact that the orchestra is now playing *In the Gloaming, Oh, My Darling* doesn't help things much.

So presently the men come back and the orchestra is stopped and the gas cut down and the curtain is hauled away up to the roof and it's—

#### ACT II—Same Evening. The Kitchen of the Haycroft Farm.

"You'll find us plain folk, sir, just plain folk. But if it'll please you to take what plain folk can offer you're heartily welcome. Now then, Phoebe girl, a chair here for the gentleman. Put another stick in the stove, Rube, it's a cold night in this November wind."

The stranger, in a strange voice, "Ay, it's a cold night."

The scene is in the farm kitchen, one of those big old farm kitchens of 1880 that filled the whole stage. There was a cooking stove—about ten feet by six in the centre stage and a fireplace with a mantel off at one side, and doors and windows—in fact all the

things that will be needed in the act, not forgetting a shotgun hanging ominously on two hooks. At the back is a big table all laid out for about a dozen guests, with Phoebe all done up in her best things fussing round laying dishes. Martha Haycroft, also in her best things (black satin with a sort of crispiness to it) is cooking at the stove. Putting the farm people with their best clothes was always supposed to imply a comic touch. Rube has on clothes like a congressman's, only lower in the coat tails and higher in the collar.

This, of course, was the supper that the farmer spoke of when he said they'd call in the neighbours.

Only for the moment all the eyes of the audience are turned on the stranger. He has a crop of straight white hair (a wig evidently) and a white beard—false, of course—and he walks partly bent with a stick, and he looks all about him, all round the room with such a queer look, as if he recognized it.

All the audience feel instinctively that that stranger is disguised. Indeed in this sort of play there always had to be somebody who turned out to be some one else.

"A raw night, sir," repeats the farmer, "there's an evil howl in the wind; I reckon there'll be stormy weather at sea, to-night, sir—"

The farmer is evidently right—for just as he says it somebody behind the scene turns on the wind with a wild and mournful howl. Luckily they don't leave it on long, just enough to let the audience know it's there.

"I just been down to the shore, sir," the farmer goes on, "I tend the light here at the foot of the farm. 'Twill be a bad night at sea to-night."

"A bad night for those at sea," repeats the stranger.

The wind howls again. Martha pauses in her cooking, looks a moment towards the window and murmurs, "The sea, the sea."

Martha, the farmer's wife, had to play alternatively a pathetic character and a comic one. It was hard to do, but the audience understood it. So she mutters "The sea! the sea!" with the yearning of a mother for her lost son, and then goes back to blowing up pancakes on the cook-stove. If that violated unity of the drama we didn't know it in 1880, so it did no harm.

"But come, come," says the farmer, "this ain't no night for feeling down-hearted. I hear the neighbours outside. Come, Martha,

we'll go out and bring them in."

This leaves Phoebe and Rube alone except for the stranger who has gone across the room and is standing with his back to them, lost in thought. So Rube and Phoebe do another love scene. Rube comes to her alongside the table and has only just time to say "Phoebe!" with a slow grin and to try to take her by the waist when she lands him across the face with a pancake. The audience roar with delight and continue laughing till they suddenly come to a full stop when they see that there is something happening with the stranger.

He has been standing with his back turned, silent. Then without warning, he speaks, his back still turned, not in his counterfeited tone, but in a loud clear voice, the voice of youth:

"Rube!"

Rube and Phoebe start. "What voice is that?" says Rube, shaking with agitation.

The stranger turns, plucks away his white wig and his white beard and stands revealed.

"Jack! It's Mr. Jack, come back from the dead!" cries Phoebe.

"Ain't you drowned?" cries Rube.

They crowd close to him in eager recognition; and Jack, young and boyish now, laughs and greets them. "Let me run and call the boss and the missus," pleads Phoebe, but Jack restrains her.

"Not now," he says, "they mustn't know yet."

He goes on to reveal, all in whispers and in gestures which the audience are not intended to unravel, that his father and mother must not know yet. He takes from his pocket a bundle of something—is it paper or money or what? The audience can't see it decently but Rube and Phoebe seem to understand and he is just explaining about it when the noise is heard of the farmer and his wife and the farm guests all coming back.

The stranger motions Rube and Phoebe to secrecy and is disguised again in a minute.

In they all come, the farm people all dressed in the queer pathos of their Sunday things and there follows the great supper scene, without which no rural melodrama was complete. Hear how they chatter and laugh. "Well, for the land's sake, taste them dough-nuts!" "Neighbour Jephson, try a slice of this pie." "Well, I don't mind if I do." "Farmer Haycroft, here's your good health and Miss



Hope's good health and of all present." "Hear! Hear!" and then some one chokes on a crumb and is beaten on the back.

The supper scene lasts ten minutes by the clock. The stranger has sat silent, beaming quiet approval and at the height of the merriment retired quietly to his room, a side room opening on the kitchen. Martha has lighted a candle for him and as he thanks her for it she says—"You're a stranger in these parts, sir? There's something in your voice I seem to know." All the audience want to shout, "He's your son." It is a touch taken right out of Sophocles. Hope meantime busies herself among the guests. Hiram Haycroft drinks great flagons of cider. At intervals the wind is turned on against the window panes to remind the audience that it's a wild night outside.

Then for a moment the farmer leaves the room because he has to go and trim his light down on the shore.

While he is still out there is loud knocking at the door. Rube goes to it and opens it—with a special biff of wind produced for his benefit—and then shows in two strangers.

A young man and an old. The young man is tall and bronzed and sailorlike and Hope runs to him at once, with a glad cry of "Ned! My Ned!" His arms are about her in a moment and the whole theatre knows that it is her husband.

"We've put in under the point," Ned explains, "and I come ashore. But it's only to say good-bye. The *Good Hope* can't lie there in this rising wind. We'll have to put off at once. This is my father, Hope. You'll be a daughter to him while I'm gone!"

Hope goes up to the old man and puts her two hands in his and says, oh, so sweetly, "I will indeed, sir, for Ned's sake."

But her mother has risen, shrinking, from her place.

"Ellwood," she says, "Lawyer Ellwood."

All the audience look at the old man. A fox certainly—oh, a sly old fox—just that look of mean cunning that stamped every rural lawyer in every melodrama for thirty years. But Hope sees nothing of it.

"No, Ned, you mustn't put to sea to-night. It's too wild a night. Hear how the rain is driving at the windows. You must stay here and your father, too. Mother, this is Ned, my husband, and this is his father, and these are our friends, Ned, and father's only gone to the light. He'll be back in just a minute—"



And at that moment the door swings open and Hiram Haycroft—shaking the wet from his black oilskins—strides back into the room. Hope comes to him pleadingly.

“Father, Father dear, this is my husband—”

But he doesn’t see her. He is staring at Ellwood.

“You!” he shouts. “You that have sought to bring ruin upon me and mine!”

Ellwood comes toward him, raising a protesting hand.

“Hiram!” he says.

“Out of my house!” shouts Haycroft. “Your accursed money is not due till to-morrow and to-morrow it shall be paid. Out! before I lay hands on you.” He steps forward menacingly, his hand uplifted. Ned Ellwood steps in his way.

“Put down your hands,” he says, “and listen to me.”

Hiram refuses to listen. He reaches for the gun that hangs above the mantel. The affrighted guests crowd around him. There is noise and confusion, above which is Haycroft’s voice, calling, “Out of my house! I say.”

The father and son move to the door, but as they go Hope rushes to her husband.

“Father! he is my husband! Where he goes I go. Ned, take me with you, out into the night and the storm.” (At these words the wind which has been quiet breaks out again.) “Out into the world, for better or for worse. Where you go I follow, my place is at your side!”

There is a burst of applause from the audience at this sentiment. That was the kind of girl they raised in 1880. There are none left now.

And so with her father’s imprecations ringing in her ears Hope casts a little grey cloak over her head and shoulders and with arm clinging to her husband passes out into the storm.

The door closes after them.

There is a hush and silence.

Not even Rube and Phoebe can break it now. The farm guests, almost inarticulate, come and say good-night and pass out. Martha, lamp in hand, goes tearfully up the stairs. Rube and Phoebe fade away.

Hiram Haycroft sits alone. The lights are dimmed down. There

is a flicker of light from the fire in the stove but little more. At times the rattle of the storm at the window makes him lift his head. Once he walks to the window and stands and gazes out into the darkness towards the sea.

And once he goes over to the dresser at the side of the room and takes from it the wallet that has in it his two thousand dollars, holds it a moment in his hand and then replaces it.

At intervals the storm is heard outside. The audience by instinct know that the act is not over. There is more tragedy to come.

The farmer rises slowly from his chair. He lays aside his oilskins. Then, still slowly, he takes off his boots—with a boot jack—a stage effect much valued in melodrama.

He moves about the room, a candle in his hand, bolts and chains the door, and so, step by step slowly and with much creaking, ascends the stairs to bed.

The audience follow in a breathless stillness. They know that something is going to happen.

Deep silence and waiting. You can hear the audience breathing. No one speaks.

Then a side door in the room is opened, slowly, cautiously. You can see a dark figure stealing across the stage—nearer and nearer to the drawer where the wallet of money is lying. Look! What is he doing? Is he taking it, or is he moving it? Is it a thief or what?

Then suddenly the farmer's voice from above.

"Who's that down there?"

You can half see the farmer as he stands on the upper landing, a candle in his hand.

"Who's that, I say?" he calls again.

The crouching figure crawls away, making for the door.

What happens after that follows with a rush. The farmer comes hurrying down the stairs, tears open the drawer and with a loud cry of "Thief! A thief!" rouses the sleeping house. You hear the people moving above. You see the lights on the stairs as the crouching figure rushes for the door. The farmer has seized his shotgun. There is a cry of "Stand there, or I'll shoot," then the flash of fire and the roar of the gun and the crouching figure falls to the floor, the farmer shouting, "Lights here. Bring a light! A thief!"

It is Rube who enters first, the others crowding after. It is Rube

who lifts the fallen body, Rube who holds the light on the pale face so that the audience may see who it is—but something has long since told them that. It is Rube who pulls aside the white wig and the white beard that had disguised the youthful features. There is a loud cry from the farmer's wife as she sinks down beside the body.

"Jack, Jack, it's my boy come back to me."

And the farmer, the gun still clenched and smoking in his hand, cries:

"My son! I have killed my son."

And with that down sinks the sombre curtain on a silent audience.

That's the way, you see that the drama was put over in 1880. We weren't afraid of real effects—terror, agony, murder—anything and the more of it the better. In a modern drawing-room play the characters get no nearer to murder than to have *Pup No. 1*, dressed in grey tweeds, discuss the theory of homicide with *Pup No. 2*, dressed in a brown golf costume. That's all the excitement there is. But in this good old farm melodrama they weren't afraid of mixing the thing up.

So the farmer is ruined, he's driven his daughter from the door and has shot his son—and there you are.

When the play reaches this point, at the end of Act Two, there is nothing for it but a two years' wait. So the play bill at this point bears the legend *Two Years E lapse between Acts Two and Three*. The audience are glad of it. Without that they couldn't have stood the tragedy of it. But as it is there are two years; the men rise and file out up the aisle; very slowly—there was no need to hurry with two years ahead of them.

The gas is turned up now and the audience are gradually recovering; a boy comes down the aisle and shouts "Peanuts!" That helps a lot. And presently when the orchestra begins to play *My Mother Said That I Never Should* they begin to get reconciled to life again. Anyway, being used to this type of play they know that things aren't so bad as they seem. Jack can't really be dead. He'll be brought to life somehow. He was shot, but he can't have been killed. Every audience knows its own line of play; in fact in all the drama the audience has to be taken for granted or the play wouldn't be intelligible. Anybody who has seen a moving picture audience snap up the

symbols and legends and conventions of a photoplay and get the required meaning out of it will know just what I mean. So it was in 1880. The audience got cheered up because they realized that Jack couldn't really be dead.

So they look at their programmes with a revived interest to see what happens next.

Here it is:

*ACT III—Two Years Later. The Fore Shore After Sunset. A Gathering Storm.*

Ah! Look at the scene as the curtain goes up now. Isn't it grand! The rocks and the breaking water and the white foam in the twilight! How ever do they do it? And the lighthouse there at the right hand side, how it towers into the dark sky! Look at the fishermen all in black oilskins and sou'westers, glistening in the wet, moving about on the shore and pointing to the sea.

Notice that short flash of yellow lightning and the rumble of thunder away behind the scene. And look at the long beams of the light from the lighthouse far out on the water.

Don't talk to me of a problem play, played in a modern drawing room as between a man in tweed and a woman in sequins. When I attend the theatre let there be a lighthouse and a gathering of huddled fishermen and danger lowering over the sea. As drama it is worth all the sex stuff that was ever slopped over the footlights.

"A wild night!"

It's a fisherman speaking—or no, it's Rube, only you would hardly know him—all in oilskins. In the New England play all the farmers turn into fishermen as the plot thickens. So it is Zeke, as another fisherman, who answers:

"It's all that! God help all poor souls out at sea to-night."

The lightning and thunder make good again, the fishermen and the women on the shore move to and fro, talking, and excited, and pointing at the sea. Rube and Zeke come together in the foreground, talking. Their function is to let the audience know all that has happened in two years.

"A wild night," Zeke repeats, "such a night as it was two years ago, you mind, the night that Mr. Jack was shot."



They both shake their heads. " 'Twould have been a sight better," says Rube, "if the farmer's bullet had killed him that night. A sad sight it is to see him as he is, witless and speechless. It's cruel hard on them all. Is he here to-night?"

"Ay, he's here to-night—he's always here on the shore when a storm is on. Look, see him there, always looking to the sea!"

The audience look at once and see in the little group standing in the gathering storm, Jack—holding to his mother hard and looking out to sea.

"She's leading him away. She'll be wanting him to go home. . . ."

So Jack isn't dead! But what is that queer, strange look on his face? Something blank, unhuman, witless. His mother leads him down the stage.

"Jack, come home, Jack. It's no place for you here in the storm."

The thunder and lightning break in again sharp and vivid and the wind roars behind the scenes.

Jack turns a vacant countenance upon his mother. His face is pale and thin. His eyes are bright.

The audience get it. Since he was shot down he has been there two years speechless and demented.

His mother keeps begging him to come home. He tries to drag her towards the sea. Demented as he is, there is a wild and growing excitement in his manner. He is pointing at the waves, gesticulating.

"What does he see?" Rube is asking. "What is it? He has a sailor's eyes. What does he see out there?"

And at that minute there comes a shout from the clustered fishermen on the Fore Shore.

"A ship! A ship! There's a vessel out on the reef. See! look!"

They run up and down, pointing and shouting. And far out on the waves lit for a moment by a flash of lightning, the audience sees a dismasted schooner—she's made of cardboard—out beside the breakers on the reef.

At this moment the freckled boy, all in oilskins, rushes breathless on to the stage. He hasn't grown an inch in two years but nobody cares about that.

"Mother, Rube," he gasps. "I've been down to the Long Point—I ran all the way—there is a schooner going on the reef. Look, you can see, and, Mother, Mother—"



The boy is almost frenzied into excitement. The crowd gathers about him.

"Mother, it's the *Good Hope*, her ship!"

"The *Good Hope*?" exclaims everybody.

The boy gasps on.

"They were lowering the boats—I could see them—but nothing can live in that sea—one boat went down—I saw it—and I could see her, Hope, standing by the mast. I could see her face when the lightning came. Then I ran here. We must go out; we must get the life boats; we've got to go. You men, who'll come?"

Come! they'll all come! Listen to the shout of them. See! they are dragging forth the life boat from its wooden house on the left of the stage. There are swinging lanterns and loud calls and the roaring of the wind. The stage is darkening and the lightning glares on the sea. But even as they are trying to launch the life boat, there's a new cry—

"Look—a boat! a boat! out there on the reef, right among the breakers."

The fishermen rush up and down in great excitement. "There's a woman in the boat! God help her! She's lost!"

"Mother, Mother, it's Hope! See she's alone in the boat, she's kneeling up; she's praying."

There are new cries:

"Man the life boat! Man the life boat!"

The great boat is dragged out and ready. The men are climbing in over the side.

Then a fisherman shouts out and is heard, clear and single, for a moment in the lull of the storm.

"There's only one man can pilot this boat across that reef, only Hiram Haycroft."

There are cries of "Hiram! Hiram!" They point out at the lighthouse from which the long beams still revolve on the water. "He can't leave the light."

Noise and commotion.

"He must leave the light."

"It's life or death on this one chance. Lads, stand ready there with the life boat and come, some of you, with me and bring him down." They rush towards the lighthouse. There is noise and thun-

der; a flash of light shows the boat, clearly in sight now, right out among the breakers and Hope seen for a moment kneeling in the bow praying, her face illuminated in the lightning. Then in a swirl of white water, the boat vanishes in the foam of the reef.

#### ACT IV

Then the scene changes—all done in a minute—from the shore to the *Lighthouse Tower*. It was what used to be called a “transformation scene.” It involved an eclipse of darkness punctured by little gas jets, and a terrible thumping and bumping with an undertone of curses. You could hear a voice in the darkness say quite distinctly, “Get that blank blank drop over there,” and you could see black figures running round in the transformation. Then there came an awful crash and a vision of a back curtain sliding down amongst the dark men. The lights flicked up again and all the audience broke into applause at the final wonder of it.

Look! It’s the lighthouse tower with the big lights burning and the storm howling outside. How bright and clear it is here inside the tower with its great windows looking out over the storm sixty feet above the sea.

He stands beside the lights, trimming the lamps, calm and steady at his task. The storm is all about him, but inside the lighthouse tower all is bright and still.

Hiram peers a moment from the lighthouse window. He opens the little door and steps out on the iron platform high above the sea. The wind roars about him and the crest of the driven water leaps to his very feet. He comes in, closing the door quietly and firmly behind him and turns again to his light.

“God help all poor souls at sea to-night,” he says.

And then with a rush and clatter of feet they burst in upon him, the group of fishermen, Martha, and his demented son, crowding into the lighthouse tower and standing on the stairs. Jack is at the rear of all, but there is a strange look on his face, a light of new intelligence.

“Quick, Hiram, you must come. There’s been a wreck. Look, there’s a boat going on the reef. The men are ready in the life boat.

You must steer her through. It's life or death. There's not a moment to lose."

Hiram looks for a moment at the excited crowd and then turns quietly to his task.

"My place is here," he says.

There is a moment's hush. Martha rushes to him and clutches him by the coat.

"Hiram, they haven't told you. The schooner that was wrecked to-night is the *Good Hope*."

Hiram staggers back against the wall.

"And the boat that's drifting on the reef, it's Hope, it's our daughter."

Hiram stands grasping the rail along the wall. He speaks panting with agitation, but firm:

"Martha—I'm sworn to tend the light. If the light fails God knows what it means to the ships at sea. If my child is lost it is God's will—but—my place is here."

And he turns back to the light.

The fishermen who have been crowding close to the window cry:

"Look down below. The boat—she's driving in here right on the rocks—the woman's still clinging to her."

Martha rushes to the window and calls, "My child, save my child! save her!" And at exactly this minute Jack steps out into the centre of the floor. His face is clear and plain beneath the light. There is no dementia left in it now.

"Father," he says, "Mother."

They all turn to look at him. But no one speaks.

"The rope," he says, "give me the rope."

He points to a long coil of rope that hangs against the wall. With a sailor's quickness of hand he takes the rope and runs a bowline knot in the end of it. In a moment, with the end of the line about his body, he throws open the door and rushes on the iron platform. "Hold fast to the line," he calls, and then the audience see him mount the iron rail, pause a moment, and then dive head first into the sea beneath.

There is shouting and clamour from the fishermen.

"There he is! Look, he's swimming to her! Hold fast there! . . . He's got her. . . . Now then, in with the line."

And with one glorious haul, up comes the line from the roaring sea with Jack at the end of it, and, tight held in his encircling arms, the fainting form of Hope, his sister.

Couldn't be done? Nonsense! That was nothing to what we used to see done in the old-time plays. If need be, Jack could have fished out a whole shipload.

There is a cry of "Saved, saved!" and Hiram Haycroft clasping the senseless form of his daughter to his heart, cries:

"My little gal! Cast up by the sea!"

And the curtain comes down in a roar of applause.

*ACT V—Six Months Later. Scene. The Kitchen of the Haycroft Farm.*

This last act in the melodrama is all to the good. There is no more tragedy, no strain, no trouble. The play is really over but this part is always put in as a sort of wind-up to make everybody happy. The audience are now sitting in a swim of luxurious sentimentality. How fine everything has turned out—Jack has got his mind back, and Hope is saved and her husband, too, and the old farm isn't mortgaged or sold and the Haycrofts are not ruined after all. Yes, and more than that; there are all kinds of little items of happiness to be thrown in.

So here we are back in the old farm kitchen, and here, of course, are Rube and Phoebe again. And Rube tries to grab Phoebe round the waist, but she says, "Oh, you, Rube, you go along," and lands a dish towel in his face. But this time Rube *won't* go along. He manages to catch Phoebe and tell her that he wants her to be his wife and throw dishcloths at him all his life, and Phoebe calls him a "big thing," and gives him a kiss like a smack (worse than a dishcloth or a pancake). So there they are, all set for marriage, as they might have been in the first act if Rube had had the nerve.

Well, they are no sooner straightened out than in come the farmer and his son Jack and Ned, Hope's husband. The farmer seems very old and infirm, though suffused with the same air of peace and happiness as all the others. The two young men help him into an arm rocking chair. "Easy now." Then Hiram sits down with that expression of difficulty "ay-ee-ee," always used to symbolize stage

rheumatism. There is no need for the farmer to become so suddenly old in the last act. But it was a favourite convention of 1880 to make all the old people very infirm and very happy at the end of the play.

So they begin to talk, just to pile on the happiness.

"I'm getting old, lads, I'm not the man I was."

"Old, Father," laughs Jack, "why, you're the youngest and spryest of all of us—"

"I'm getting past work, boys," says the farmer, shaking his head, "past work—"

"Work," says Jack, "why should you work?" And as the talk goes on you get to understand that Jack will never go to sea again but will stay and work the farm and they've just received the "papers" that appoint him keeper of the light in his father's place, with a pension for the old man. And Ned, Hope's husband, is going to stay right there too. His father has bought him the farm just adjoining with house and stock and everything and he and Hope are all ready to move into it just as soon as—

But wait a minute.

His father! Lawyer Ellwood! And the terrible enmity and feud!

Oh, pshaw, just watch that feud vanish! In the fifth act of an old time melodrama a feud could be blown to the four winds like thistledown.

Like this:

There's a knocking at the door and Ned goes to it and comes back all smiling and he says:

"There's some one at the door to see you, Mr. Haycroft. An old friend he says, shall he come in?"

"An old friend?" And in slips Ellwood—the farmer's enemy, Hope's father-in-law—looking pretty hale and hearty, but with the same touch of the old age of the fourth act visible.

He comes over and says:

"Well, Hiram, have you a shake of the hand for an old friend?"

And the farmer, rising, unsteadily:

"Why, Ephraim, it's not your hand I should be taking; it's your forgiveness I ought to ask for my mad folly these two years past."

"Forgiveness," says the lawyer; how honest and cheery he looks now, not a bit like the scoundrel he seemed in the second act—"forgiveness!"



And off he goes with *his* explanation.

That's the whole purpose of the fifth act—explanation.

And what do you think! He'd been Hiram's friend all along and was not in earnest about wanting the money back from Hiram—didn't want it at all! And he knew all about Hope's love affair and Jack's safe return with his son and was tickled to death over it—and that night two years ago when the farmer drove him out he had come over to tell the Haycrofts that the debt was cancelled, and he was going to buy a farm and start the young people, Ned and Hope, in life—and it was the cancelled mortgage that Jack was trying to sneak over and put in the drawer when his father shot him down!—and—why, dear me, how simple it all is in the fifth act. Why didn't he explain? Why didn't he shout out, "Hiram, I'm not a villain at all, I'm your old friend—" Oh, pshaw, who ever did *explain* things in the second act of a melodrama? And where would the drama be if they did?

So they are still explaining and counter-explaining and getting happier and happier when the last climax is staged.

The audience hear Martha's voice as she comes on to the stage, talking back into the wings, "Carry him carefully there, Phoebe, for the land's sake, if you drop that precious child—"

And in they come.

Martha and Hope! Looking as sweet and fresh as when she started out years ago in the first act. And bringing up the rear Phoebe—*carrying the Baby*.

Yes, believe it or not, a baby!—or the very semblance of one all bundled up in white.

Hope's baby!

No melodrama was ever brought to its righteous end without a baby.

How the women all cuddle round it and croon over it! They put it on the farmer's lap—and say, isn't he just clumsy when he tries to take it—and when Rube offers to help, and Phoebe slaps his face with a dish rag, the audience just go into paroxysms of laughter.

So there you are—and everybody saved. All happy, the baby installed on the farmer's knees and explanations flowing like autumn cider.

All that is needed now is the farmer to get off the *Final Religious*

*Sentiment* which is the end and benediction of the good old melodrama. So he utters it with all due solemnity: "Ay, lads, pin your hope in Providence and in the end you land safe in port."

It sounds as convincing as a proposition in Euclid. Then the curtain slowly comes down and the matinée audience melts away, out into the murky November evening, with the flickering gas lamps in the street, and the clanging bells of the old horse-cars in their ears, but with their souls uplifted and illuminated with the moral glow of the melodrama.

## HISTORICAL DRAMA

AFTER all there is nothing like the Historical Drama! Say what you will about moving pictures or high-speed vaudeville they never have the same air and class to them. For me as soon as I see upon the programme "A tucket sounds!" I am all attention, and when it says "Enter Queen Elizabeth to the sound of Hoboes," I am thrilled. What does it matter if the queen's attendants seem to speak as if they came from Yonkers? There is dignity about it all the same. When you have, moving in front of you on the stage, people of the class of Louis Quatorze, Henry Quinze, Arthur Cromwell and Mary of Roumania, you feel somehow as if they were distinctly superior to such characters as Big-hearted Jim, and Shifty Pete and Meg of the Bowery and Inspector Corcoran. Perhaps they are!

But of all the characters that walk upon the stage, commend me to Napoleon. What I don't know about that man's life from seeing him on the boards is not worth discussing. I have only to close my eyes and I can see him before me as depicted by our greatest actors, with his one lock of hair and his forehead like a door knob, his melancholy eyes painted black and yellow underneath. And as for his family life, his relations with Josephine, his dealings with the Countess Skandaliska, I could write it all down if it was lost.

There is something about that man—I don't mind admitting it—that holds me. And he exercises the same fascination over all our great actors. About once in every ten years some one of them, intoxicated by success, decides that he wants to be Napoleon. It is a thing that happens to all of them. It is something in their brain that breaks.

Every time that this happens a new Napoleonic play is produced. That is, it is called *new* but it is really the same old play over again. The title is always entirely new but that is because it is a convention that the title of a Napoleon play is never a straight-out statement of what it means such as "Napoleon, Emperor of France" or "Napoleon

and Josephine." It is called, let us say, "Quinze Pour Cent" or "Mille Fois Non" or "Des Deux Choses L'Une"—that sort of thing. And after it is named it is always strung together in the same way and it is always done in little fits and starts that have no real connection with one another but are meant to show Napoleon at all the familiar angles. In fact, here is how it goes:

## "DES DEUX CHOSES L'UNE"

### *A Drama of the First Empire*

Adapted from the French of Dumas, Sardou, Hugo, Racine, Corneille, and all others who ever wrote of Napoleon.

The opening part of the play is intended to show the extraordinary fidelity towards the Emperor on the part of the marshals of France whom he had created.

#### SCENE ONE

*The ball room of the palace of the Tuileries. Standing around are ladies in directoire dresses, brilliant as rainbows. Up right beside them are the marshals of France. There is music and a buzz of conversation.*

Enter Napoleon followed by Talleyrand in black, and two secretaries carrying boxes. There is silence. The Emperor seats himself at a little table. The secretaries place on it two black despatch boxes.

The Emperor speaks: Marshal Junot.

The Marshal steps forward and salutes.

THE EMPEROR: Marshal: I have heard strange rumours and doubts about your fidelity. I wish to test it. I have here—he opens one of the boxes—a vial of poison. Here—drink it.

JUNOT: With pleasure, Sire.

Junot drinks the poison and stands to attention.

THE EMPEROR: Go over there and stand beside the Comtesse de la Polissonerie till you die.

JUNOT (*saluting*): With pleasure, Sire.

NAPOLÉON (*turns to another marshal*): Berthier?

Here, Sire!

Berthier steps out in front of the Emperor.

THE EMPEROR (*rising*): Ha! Ha! Is it you—he reaches up and pinches Berthier's ear—*Vieux paquet de linge sale!*

Berthier looks delighted. It is amazing what a French marshal will do for you if you pinch his ear. At least it is a tradition of the stage. In these scenes Napoleon always pinched the Marshals' ears and called them—*Vieux paquet de linge sale*, etc.

The Emperor turns stern in a moment.

Marshal Berthier!

Sire!

Are you devoted to my person?

Sire, you have but to put me to the test.

Very well. Here, Marshal Berthier (Napoleon reaches into the box), is a poisoned dog biscuit. Eat it.

BERTHIER (*saluting*): With pleasure, Sire. It is excellent.

NAPOLEON: Very good, *Mon Vieux trait d'union*. Now go and talk to the Duchesse de la Rotisserie till you die.

Berthier bows low.

THE EMPEROR: Marshal Lannes! You look pale. Here is a veal chop. It is full of arsenic. Eat it.

Marshal Lannes bows in silence and swallows the chop in one bite.

The Emperor then gives a paquet of prussic acid to Marshal Soult, one pill each to Marshals Ney and Augereau, then suddenly he rises and stamps his foot.

No, Talleyrand, no! The farce is finished! I can play it no longer. Look, *les braves enfants!* They have eaten poison for me. *Ah non, mes amis, mon vieux*. Reassure yourselves. You are not to die. See, the poison was in the other box.

TALLEYRAND (*shrugging his shoulders*): If your Majesty insists upon spoiling everything.

NAPOLEON: Yes, yes, those brave fellows could not betray me. Come, Berthier. Come, Junot, come and let us cry together—

The Emperor and his marshals all gather in a group, sobbing convulsively and pulling one another's ears.

But one must not think that the Imperial Court was all sentiment. Ah, no! The great brain of the Emperor could be turned in a mo-



ment to other concerns and focused into a single point of concentrated efficiency. As witness:

## SCENE TWO

*Showing how Napoleon used to dictate a letter, carry on a battle, and Reveal Business Efficiency at the Acme.*

Napoleon in a room in a château, announced to be somewhere near a battle, striding up and down, dictating a letter with his hat on. On the stage the great Emperor always dictates through his hat. A secretary sitting at a table is vainly trying to keep pace with the rush of words.

Now are you ready, de Meneval. Have you written that last sentence?

DE MENEVAL (*writing desperately*): In a moment, Sire, in a moment.

Imbecile, write this then, "The Prefect of Lyons is ordered to gather all possible cannon for the defence of Toulon . . . He is reminded that there are six cannon on the ramparts of Lyons which he has apparently forgotten. The Emperor orders him to pass them forward at once—" Have you written that, imbecile?

In a moment, Sire, in a moment.

"To have them forwarded to Toulon. He is reminded that there are six more in the back garden of the Ministry of the Marine, and two put away in the basement of the Methodist Church."

The Secretary collapses. Napoleon stamps his foot. A terrible looking Turkish attendant, Marmalade the Mameluke, comes in and drags him out by the collar, and then drags in another secretary and props him up in a chair where he at once commences to write furiously.

Napoleon never stops dictating—

"There are two more cannons in the garage of the Prefect of Police. One has a little piece knocked out of the breech—"

THE SECRETARY (*pausing in surprise*): Mon Dieu!

THE EMPEROR: Eh, what, mon enfant. What surprises you?

THE SECRETARY: Ah, Sire, it is too wonderful. How can you tell that a piece is out of the breeches?

NAPOLÉON (*pinching his ear*): Ha! You think me wonderful!

THE SECRETARY: I do.

NAPOLEON (*pulling his hair*): I am. And my cannon! I know them all. That one with the piece knocked out of the breech shall I tell you how I know it?

THE SECRETARY: Ah, Sire!

Marmalade, the Mameluke comes in and salaams to the ground.

THE EMPEROR: Well, what is it? *Vieux fromage de cuir!*

The Mameluke gurgles about a pint of Turkish.

THE EMPEROR: Ha! Bring her in (*to the secretary*). You may go. You, Marmalade, after she enters, stand behind that curtain, so—your scimitar so—if I stamp my left foot—you understand.

MARMALADE (*with a salaam*): Zakouski, Anchovi.

EMPEROR: Good. Show her in.

There enters with a rush a beautiful half Polish Countess Skandaliska. She throws herself at the Emperor's feet.

Sire, Sire, my husband! I crave his life.

NAPOLEON (*taking her by the chin and speaking coldly*): You are very beautiful.

Sire! My husband. I ask his life. He is under orders to be shot this morning.

THE EMPEROR (*coldly*): Let me feel your ears.

Ah! Sire. In pity, I beg you for his life.

THE EMPEROR (*absently*): You have nice fat arms. Let me pinch them.

Sire! My husband. . . .

THE EMPEROR (*suddenly changing his tone*): Yes, your husband. Did you think I did not know. I have it here. (*He turns his back on the Countess, picks up a document from the table and reads*):

"Scratchitoff Skandaliska, Count of Poland, Baron of Lithuania, Colonel of the Fifth Lancers, reported by the Imperial police as in the pay of the Czar of Russia—" Ha! Did you think I did not know that?

His back is still turned. The Countess is standing upright. Her face is as of stone. Slowly she draws from her bodice a long poniard, slowly she raises it above the Emperor's back.

Napoleon goes on reading.

"—conspired with seven others, since executed, to take the life of the Emperor, and now this 5th day of September . . ."

The Countess has raised the poniard to its height. As she is about to stab the Emperor, he taps slightly with his foot. Marmalade, the Mameluke, has flung aside the curtain and grasps the Countess from behind by both wrists. The poniard rattles to the floor. The Emperor turns and goes on calmly reading the document.

"This 5th day of September, pardoned by the clemency of the Emperor and restored to his estates."

The Countess released by Marmalade, falls weeping at the Emperor's feet.

Ah! Sire, you are indeed noble.

NAPOLEON: Am I not? Take her out, Marmalade. (*The Mameluke bows, takes out the weeping Countess and returns with a renewed salaam*):

THE EMPEROR (*dreamily*): We know how to treat them, don't we? old trognan de chou. Let no one disturb that mirror. It may serve us again. And now, bring me a secretary, and I will go on dictating.

In this way did the great Emperor transact more business in a week than most men would get through in a day.

But in this very same play of *Des Deux Choses L'Une*, we have to remember that while all these other things are happening Napoleon is also fighting a battle.

In fact hardly is the Countess Skandaliska well off the premises before a military aide-de-camp comes rattling into the room. The great Brain is in full operation again in a second.

Ha! Colonel Escargot. What news?

Bad news, Sire. Marshal Masséna reports the battle is lost.

THE EMPEROR (*frowning*): Bad news. The battle lost? Do you not know, Colonel Escargot, that I do not permit a battle to be lost? How long have you been in my service? Let me see, you were at Austerlitz?

I was, Sire.

And you were afterwards in Cantonments at Strasburg?

It is true, Sire.

I saw you there for five minutes on the afternoon of the 3rd of November of 1810.

Sire! It is wonderful.

Tut, tut, it is nothing. You were playing dominoes. I remember

you had just thrown a double three when I arrived.

COLONEL ESCARGOT (*falling on his knees*): Sire, it is too much. You are inspired.

THE EMPEROR (*smiling*): Perhaps. But realize then, that I do not allow a battle to be lost. Get up, *mon vieux bonnet de coton*, let me pinch your ear. Now then, this battle, let us see. You, the secretary, give me a map.

The secretary unfolds a vast map on the table. The Emperor stands in deep thought regarding it. Presently he speaks:

Where is Masséna?

COLONEL ESCARGOT (*indicating a spot*): He is here, Sire.

What is his right resting on?

His right, Sire, is extended here. It is endangered. (*The Emperor remains a moment in thought.*)

How is his centre?

His centre is solid.

And where has he got his rear?

His rear, Sire, is resting on a thorn hedge.

THE EMPEROR: Ha! Ride to Masséna at once. Tell him to haul in his centre and to stick out his rear. The battle will be won in two hours.

ESCARGOT (*saluting*): Sire. It is wonderful. (*He clatters out.*)

Napoleon sinks wearily into a chair. His head droops in his hands. "Wonderful!" he broods, "and yet the one thing of all things that I want to do, I can't do."

Indeed the man is really up against it. He can remember cannons and win battles and tell Masséna where to put his rear, but when it comes to Josephine, he is no better than the rest of us.

The Emperor rings the bell.

The secretary comes in.

Listen, I have taken a decision. I am going to divorce Josephine.

The secretary bows.

Go to her at once and tell her that she is divorced.

The secretary bows again.

If she asks why, say that it is the Emperor's command. You understand.

I do.

If she tries to come here, do not permit it. Stop her, if need be

with your own hands. Tell Marmalade she is not to pass. Tell him to choke her. Tell the guard outside to stop her. Tell them to fire a volley at her. Do you understand? She is *not* to come.

Alas, Sire, it is too late. She is here now. I hear her voice.

One can hear outside the protests of the guards.

The Empress Josephine, beautiful and disheveled and streaming with tears pushes Marmalade aside with an imperious gesture and dashes into the room. She speaks:

Napoleon, what is this? What does it mean? Tell me it is not true? You could not dare?

NAPOLEON (*timidly*): I think there is some mistake. Not dare what?

JOSEPHINE: To divorce me? You could not? You would not? Ah! heartless one, you could not do it.

She falls upon Napoleon's neck weeping convulsively.

THE EMPEROR: Josephine, there has been a delusion, a misunderstanding, of course I would not divorce you. Who dares hint at such a thing?

JOSEPHINE: Outside, in the waiting room, in the court they are all saying it.

NAPOLEON: Ha! Let them dare! They shall answer with their heads.

JOSEPHINE: Ah, now, you are my own dear Napoleon. Let me fold you in my arms. Let me kiss you on the top of the head. (*She hugs and kisses the Emperor with enthusiasm.*)

NAPOLEON: Ah, Josephine, how much I love you.

A voice is heard without. Colonel Escargot enters rapidly. He is deadly pale but has a triumphant look on his face. He salutes.

Sire, everything is saved.

NAPOLEON: Ah! So the battle was not lost after all.

No, Sire, your orders were sent by semaphore telegraph. Masséna withdrew his rear and thrust out his centre. A panic broke out in the ranks of the enemy.

Ha! The enemy? Who are they?

We are not sure. We think Russians. But at least, Sire, they are fleeing in all directions. Masséna is in pursuit. The day is ours.

THE EMPEROR: It is well. But you, Colonel Escargot, you are wounded!



THE COLONEL (*faintly*): No, Sire, not wounded.

NAPOLEON: But, yes—

COLONEL ESCARGOT: Not wounded, Sire, killed, I have a bullet through my heart.

He sinks down on the carpet.

The Emperor bends over him.

ESCARGOT (*feebly*): *Vive l'Empereur.* (*He dies.*)

NAPOLEON (*standing for a moment and looking at the body of Colonel Escargot*): Alas! Josephine, all my victories cannot give me back the life of one brave man. I might have known it at the start.

He remains in reflection. "I should have chosen at the beginning. Tranquillity or conquest, greatness or happiness—*Des Deux Choses L'Une.*"

And as he says that the curtain slowly sinks upon the brooding Emperor. The play is over. In fact there is no need to go on with it. Now that the audience know why it is called *Des Deux Choses L'Une*, there is no good going any further. All that is now needed is the usual Transfiguration Scene.

Napoleon, dying at St. Helena, seen in a half light with a vast net curtain across the stage and a dim background of storm, thunder, and the armies of the dead—

That, with a little rumbling of cannon—the distant rolling of a South Atlantic storm—

And then—the pomp has passed—turn up the lamps and let the *matinée* audience out into the daylight.

But we must not suppose for a minute that French history has any monopoly of dramatic interest. Oh, dear, no. We have recently discovered that right here on the North American continent there is material teeming with dramatic interest. Any quantity of it. In fact it begins right at the start of our history and goes right on. Consider the aboriginal Indian; what a figure for tragedy. Few people perhaps realize that no less than seventeen first-class tragedies, each as good as Shakespeare's, and all in blank verse, have been written about the Indians. They have to be in blank verse. There was something about the primitive Indian that invited it. It was the real way to express him.

Unfortunately these Indian tragedies cannot be produced on the

stage. They are ahead of the age. The managers to whom they have been submitted say that as yet there is no stage suitable for them, and no actors capable of acting them, and no spectators capable of sitting for them. Here is a sample of such a tragedy.

## METTAWAMKEAG

### *An Indian Tragedy*

The scene is laid on the shores of Lake Mettawamkeag near the junction of the Peticodiac and the Passamoquidiac Rivers. The sun is rising.

Enter *Areopagitica*, an Indian chief.

With *The Encyclopedia*—a brave of the Appendixes.

And *Pilaffe de Volaille*, a French Coureur des bois.

. . . . .

AREOPAGITICA:

Hail, vernal sun, that thus with trailing beam  
Illuminates with gold the flaming east,  
Hail, too, cerulean sky that touched with fire  
Expels th' accumulate cloud of vanished night.

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA: Hail! Oh! Hail.

PILAFFE DE VOLAILLE: Hêle! Oh, hêle.

AREOPAGITICA:

All nature seems to leap with morn to song,  
Tempting to gladness the awakening bird,  
E'en the dark cedar feels the gladsome hour  
And the light larch pulsates in every frond.  
Who art thou? Whence? And whither goest thou?

PILAFFE DE VOLAILLE:

Thrice three revolving suns have waxed and waned  
Since first I wended hither from afar,  
Nor knowing not, nor caring aught, if here or there,  
Who am I? One that is. Whence come I? From beyond,

The restless main whose hyperboreal tide  
 Laves coast and climes unknown, Oh, Chief, to thy sagacity.  
 From France I came.

AREOPAGITICA: Hail!

*(What Pilaffe de Volaille means is that he has been out here for nine years and lives near Mettawamkeag. But there is such a size and feeling about this other way of saying it, that it seems a shame that dramas of this kind can't be acted.)*

After they have all said, "Oh, hail!" and "Oh, hêle," as many times as is necessary, Areopagitica and The Encyclopedia take Pilaffe de Volaille to the Lodge of the Appendixes.

There he is entertained on hot dog. And there he meets *Sparkling Soda Water*, the daughter of Areopagitica.

After the feast the two wander out into the moonlight together beside the waterfall. Love steals into their hearts. Pilaffe de Volaille invokes the moon.

"Thou silver orb whose incandescent face  
 Smiles on the bosom of the turgid flood  
 Look deep into mine heart and search if aught  
 Less pure than thy white beam inspires its love,  
 Soda, be mine!"

Soda Water speaks:

Alas! What words are these! What thought is this!  
 Thy meaning what? Unskilled to know,  
 My simple words can find no answer to the heart's appeal,  
 Where am I at?

PILAFFE DE VOLAILLE: Flee with me.

SODA WATER: Alas!

PILAFFE: Flee.

SODA WATER (*invoking the constellations of the Zodiac*):

Ye glimmering lights that from the Milky Way  
 To the tall zenith of the utmost pole  
 Illume the vault of heaven and indicate  
 The inclination of the axis of the earth

Showing sidereal time and the mean measurement  
Of the earth's parallax,  
Help me.

PILAFFE DE VOLAILLE (*in despair*): "Oh, hêlé!"

Both the lovers know that their tragic love is hopeless. For them, marriage is out of the question. De Volaille is sprung from an old French family, with eight quarters of noble birth, a high average even at a time when most people were well born. He cannot ally himself with anything less white than himself. On the other hand Sparkling Soda knows that, after the customs of her time, her father has pledged her hand to the Encyclopedia. She cannot marry a pale face.

Thus, what might have been a happy marriage, is queered from the start. Each is too well born to stoop to the other. This often happens.

Standing thus in the moonlight beside the waterfall the lovers are surprised by Areopagitica and The Encyclopedia. In despair Sparkling Soda leaps into the flood. The noble Encyclopedia plunges headlong after her into the boiling water and is boiled. De Volaille flees.

Areopagitica vows vengeance. Staining himself with grape juice he declares a war of extermination against the white race. The camp of the French is surprised in a night attack. Pilaffe de Volaille, fighting with the courage of his race, is pierced with an Indian arrow. He expires on the spot, having just time before he dies to prophesy in blank verse the future greatness of the United States.

Areopagitica, standing among the charred ruins of the stockaded fort and gazing upon the faces of the dead, invokes the nebular Hypothesis and prophesies clearly the League of Nations.

. . . . .  
The same dramatic possibilities seem to crop up all through American history from Christopher Columbus to President Hoover.

But to see the thing at its height it is better to skip about three hundred years in one hop and come down to what is perhaps the greatest epic period in American history—the era of the Civil War.

This great event has been portrayed so often in the drama and the moving pictures that everybody knows just how it is dealt with. It

is generally put on under some such title as the Making of the Nation, or The Welding of the Nation, or the Riveting of the Nation—or, The Hammering, or the Plastering—in short, a metaphor taken from the building and contracting trades. Compare this:

## FORGING THE FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT

### *A Drama of the Civil War*

The scene is laid in the Council room of the White House. There are present Abraham Lincoln, Seward, Staunton, Artemus Ward, and the other members of the cabinet.

LINCOLN (*speaking very gravely*): Mr. Secretary, what news have you from the Army of the Potomac?

STAUNTON: Mr. President, the news is bad. General Halleck has been driven across the Rappahannock, General Pope has been driven across the Roanoke, and General Burnside has been driven across the Pamunkey.

LINCOLN (*with quiet humour*): And has anybody been driven across the Chickahominy?

STAUNTON: Not yet.

LINCOLN: Then it might be worse. Let me tell you a funny story that I heard ten years ago.

SEWARD (*with ill-disguised impatience*): Mr. President, this is no time for telling stories ten years old.

LINCOLN (*wearily*): Perhaps not. In that case fetch me the Constitution of the United States.

The Constitution is brought and is spread out on the table, in front of them. They bend over it anxiously.

LINCOLN (*with deep emotion*): What do you make of it?

STAUNTON: It seems to me, from this, that all men are free and equal.

SEWARD (*gravely*): And that the power of Congress extends to the regulation of commerce between the States, with foreign states, and with Indian Tribes.

LINCOLN (*thoughtfully*): The price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

(In the printed text of the play there is a note here to the effect that Lincoln did not on this particular occasion use this particular



phrase. Indeed it was said by some one else on some other occasion. But it is such a good thing for any one to say on any occasion, that it is the highest dramatic art to use it.)

LINCOLN (*standing up from the table to his full height and speaking as one who looks into the future*): Gentlemen, I am prepared to sacrifice any part of this Constitution to save the whole of it, or to sacrifice the whole of it to save any part of it, but what I will not do is to sacrifice all of it to save none of it.

There is a murmur of applause. But at this very moment, a messenger dashes in.

THE MESSENGER: Mr. President, telegraphic news from the seat of war. General Grant has been pushed over the Chickahominy.

LINCOLN: Pushed backwards or pushed forwards?

THE MESSENGER: Forwards.

LINCOLN (*gravely*): Gentlemen, the Union is safe.

## THE FADED ACTOR

I CAN call him to my mind as I have seen him burlesqued and parodied a hundred times—The Faded Actor. There he stands in his bell-shaped coat drawn at the waist and ample in the skirt. The battered hat that he handles in his elaborate gestures, and holds against his heart as he bows, is but the wreck of a hat that was. His faded trousers are tight upon his legs, drawn downwards with a strap, and carrying some lingering suggestion of the days of Beau Brummel and George the Fourth. His ample buttons are pierced out with string. His frilled cuffs are ostentatious in their raggedness.

From top to toe his creators have made a guy of him, a mean parody of forgotten graces. When he speaks his voice is raucous and rotund. There is something of Shakespeare in it, and something of gin. His face is a blossom that has bloomed overmuch. His feet move in long shoes, fitless, and so worn that he slides noiselessly across the stage. Beneath his arm, as if to complete the pathos of his figure, is the rolled up manuscript of the play that he has composed and that the managers, shame be to them, refuse to produce.

In a thousand plays and parodies you shall see this figure of the Faded Actor, a stock abject of undying ridicule. It is a signal for our laughter when he takes a drink, fawning to get it and swallowing it as if into a funnel; it is a signal for our laughter when he cadges for a coin, the smallest not coming amiss; when he arranges with elaborate care upon his uplifted wrist the ruins of his cuff; and most of all when he draws forth from beneath his arm his manuscript and stands forth to read what none will hear except in mockery, with his poor self carried away unconscious with the art of it.

Mark him now as he strikes his attitude to read. Hear the full voice, deep and resonant for all the gin that is in it. No parody can quite remove the majesty of that, nor the grace that has once lived in those queer gestures. Let us temper our laughter, as we look upon him, with something kindlier than mockery, something nearer to

respect; for in the Faded Actor with his strange twists and graces, his futile manuscript, his blighted hopes, his unredeemed ambitions, we are looking upon all that is best in the great traditions of the stage. That thick deep voice—comic now, but once revered—that is the surviving tradition of the Elizabethan tragedy, declaimed as a Shakespeare or a Marlowe would have had it. That sliding step so funny to our eye, is all that lingers of the dainty grace of the eighteenth century when dance and stage were one; or that dragging limp with which the poor Faded Actor crosses the stage—he does not know it, but that has come to him from Garrick; or see that long gesticulation of the hand revealing the bare wrist below the cuff, there was a time when such gesticulation was the admired model of a Fox or a Sheridan, and held, even at second hand, the admiration of a senate.

Nay more, there is a thing in the soul of the Faded Actor that all may envy who in this life are busied with the aesthetic arts. For after all what does he want, poor battered guy, with his queer gestures and his outlandish graces? Money? Not he. He has never had, nor ever dreamed of it. A coin here, and there, enough to buy a dram of gin or some broad cheap writing paper on which to enscribe his thoughts—that much he asks; but beyond that his ambition never goes, for it travels elsewhere and by another road. His soul at least is pure of the taint that is smeared across the arts by the money rewards of a commercial age. He lived too soon to hear of the millions a year that crown success and kill out genius; that substitute publicity for fame; that tempt a man to do the work that pays and neglect the promptings of his soul, and that turn the field of the arts into one great glare of notoriety and noise. Not so worked and lived a Shakespeare or a Michael Angelo; and the Faded Actor descends directly from them. Art for Art's sake, is his whole creed, unconscious though it be. Some one to listen to his lines, an audience though only in a barn or beside the hedgerow, a certain mead of praise that is the breath of art and the inspiration of effort; this he asks and no more. A yacht, a limousine, a palace beside the sea—of these things the Faded Actor has never heard. A shelter in some one else's premises, enough gin to keep his voice as mellow as Shakespeare would have wished it, and with that, permission to recite his lines, and to stand forth in his poor easy fancy as a King

of Carthage, or a Sultan of Morocco. Such is the end and aim of his ambition. But out of such forms of ambition has been built up all that is best in art.

To him, therefore, I dedicate this book. He will never read it, and I easily forgive him that. His brain has long since acquired a delicacy of adjustment that renders reading a superfluity. But I make the dedication all the same as a humble tribute to those high principles of art which are embodied in the Faded Actor.

## HOMER AND HUMBUG





## HOMER AND HUMBUG, AN ACADEMIC DISCUSSION

I DO not mind confessing that for a long time past I have been very sceptical about the classics. I was myself trained as a classical scholar. It seemed the only thing to do with me. I acquired such a singular facility in handling Latin and Greek that I could take a page of either of them, distinguish which it was by merely glancing at it, and, with the help of a dictionary and a pair of compasses, whip off a translation of it in less than three hours.

But I never got any pleasure from it. I lied about it. At first, perhaps, I lied through vanity. Any scholar will understand the feeling. Later on I lied through habit; later still because, after all, the classics were all that I had and so I valued them. I have seen thus a deceived dog value a pup with a broken leg, and a pauper child nurse a dead doll with the sawdust out of it. So I nursed my dead Homer and my broken Demosthenes though I knew in my heart that there was more sawdust in the stomach of one modern author than in the whole lot of them.

So, as I say, I began to lie about the classics. I said to people who knew no Greek that there was a sublimity, a majesty about Homer which they could never hope to grasp. I said it was like the sound of the sea beating against the granite cliffs of the Ionian Esophagus: or words to that effect. As for the truth of it, I might as well have said that it was like the sound of a rum distillery running a night shift on half time. At any rate this is what I said about Homer, and when I spoke of Pindar—the dainty grace of his strophes—and Aristophanes, the delicious sallies of his wit, sally after sally, each sally explained in a note calling it a sally—I managed to suffuse my face with an animation which made it almost beautiful.

I admitted of course that Virgil in spite of his genius had a hardness and a cold glitter which resembled rather the brilliance of a

cut diamond than the soft grace of a flower. Certainly I admitted this: the mere admission of it would knock the breath out of any one who was arguing.

From such talks my friends went away sad. The conclusion was too cruel. It had all the cold logic of a syllogism (like that almost brutal form of argument so much admired in the *Paraphernalia* of Socrates). For if:

Virgil and Homer and Pindar had all this grace, and pith and these sallies—

And if I read Virgil and Homer and Pindar,  
And if they only read Mrs. Wharton and Mrs. Humphry Ward  
Then where were they?

So continued lying brought its own reward in the sense of superiority and I lied more.

When I reflect that I have openly expressed regret, as a personal matter, even in the presence of women, for the missing books of Tacitus, and the entire loss of the *Abracadabra* of Polyphemus of Syracuse, I can find no words in which to beg for pardon. In reality I was just as much worried over the loss of the *ichthyosaurus*. More, indeed: I'd like to have seen it: but if the books Tacitus lost were like those he didn't, I wouldn't.

I believe all scholars lie like this. An ancient friend of mine, a clergyman, tells me that in Hesiod he finds a peculiar grace that he doesn't find elsewhere. He's a liar. That's all. Another man, in politics and in the legislature, tells me that every night before going to bed he reads over a page or two of Thucydides to keep his mind fresh. Either he never goes to bed or he's a liar. Doubly so: no one could read Greek at that frantic rate: and anyway his mind isn't fresh. How could it be, he's in the legislature. I don't object to this man talking freely of the classics, but he ought to keep it for the voters. My own opinion is that before he goes to bed he takes whisky: why call it Thucydides?

I know there are solid arguments advanced in favour of the classics. I often hear them from my colleagues. My friend the professor of Greek tells me that he truly believes the classics have made him what he is. This is a very grave statement, if well founded. Indeed I have heard the same argument from a great many Latin and Greek

scholars. They all claim, with some heat, that Latin and Greek have practically made them what they are. This damaging charge against the classics should not be too readily accepted. In my opinion some of these men would have been what they are, no matter what they were.

Be this as it may, I for my part bitterly regret the lies I have told about my appreciation of Latin and Greek literature. I am anxious to do what I can to set things right. I am therefore engaged on, indeed have nearly completed, a work which will enable all readers to judge the matter for themselves. What I have done is a translation of all the great classics, not in the usual literal way but on a design that brings them into harmony with modern life. I will explain what I mean in a minute.

The translation is intended to be within reach of everybody. It is so designed that the entire set of volumes can go on a shelf twenty-seven feet long, or even longer. The first edition will be an *édition de luxe* bound in vellum, or perhaps in buckskin, and sold at five hundred dollars. It will be limited to five hundred copies and, of course, sold only to the feeble minded. The next edition will be the Literary Edition, sold to artists, authors, actors and contractors. After that will come the Boarding House Edition, bound in board and paid for in the same way.

My plan is to so transpose the classical writers as to give, not the literal translation word for word, but what is really the modern equivalent. Let me give an odd sample or two to show what I mean. Take the passage in the First Book of Homer that describes Ajax the Greek dashing into the battle in front of Troy. Here is the way it runs (as nearly as I remember), in the usual word for word translation of the classroom, as done by the very best professor, his spectacles glittering with the literary rapture of it.

"Then he too Ajax on the one hand leaped (or possibly jumped) into the fight wearing on the other hand, yes, certainly a steel corselet (or possibly a bronze under tunic) and on his head of course, yes, without doubt he had a helmet with a tossing plume taken from the mane (or perhaps extracted from the tail) of some horse which once fed along the banks of the Scamander (and it sees the herd and raises its head and paws the ground) and in his hand a shield

worth a hundred oxen and on his knees too especially in particular greaves made by some cunning artificer (or perhaps blacksmith) and he blows the fire and it is hot. Thus Ajax leapt (or, better, was propelled from behind) into the fight."

Now that's grand stuff. There is no doubt of it. There's a wonderful movement and force to it. You can almost see it move, it goes so fast. But the modern reader can't get it. It won't mean to him what it meant to the early Greek. The setting, the costume, the scene has all got to be changed in order to let the reader have a real equivalent to judge just how good the Greek verse is. In my translation I alter it just a little, not much but just enough to give the passage a form that reproduces the proper literary value of the verses, without losing anything of the majesty. It describes, I may say, the Directors of the American Industrial Stocks rushing into the Balkan War Cloud.

Then there came rushing to the shock of war  
Mr. McNicoll of the C. P. R.  
He wore suspenders and about his throat  
High rose the collar of a sealskin coat.  
He had on gaiters and he wore a tie,  
He had his trousers buttoned good and high;  
About his waist a woollen undervest  
Bought from a sad-eyed farmer of the West.  
(And every time he clips a sheep he sees  
Some bloated plutocrat who ought to freeze),  
Thus in the Stock Exchange he burst to view,  
Leaped to the post, and shouted, "Ninety-two!"

There! That's Homer, the real thing! Just as it sounded to the rude crowd of Greek peasants who sat in a ring and guffawed at the rhymes and watched the minstrel stamp it out into "feet" as he recited it!

Or let me take another example from the so-called Catalogue of the Ships that fills up nearly an entire book of Homer. This famous passage names all the ships, one by one, and names the chiefs who sailed on them, and names the particular town or hill or valley that they came from. It has been much admired. It has that same majesty



of style that has been brought to an even loftier pitch in the New York Business Directory and the City Telephone Book. It runs along, as I recall it, something like this—

“And first, indeed, oh yes, was the ship of Homistogetes the Spartan, long and swift, having both its masts covered with cowhide and two rows of oars. And he, Homistogetes, was born of Hermogenes and Ophthalmia and was at home in Syncope beside the fast flowing Paresis. And after him came the ship of Preposterus the Eurasian, son of Oasis and Hyteria,” . . . and so on endlessly.

Instead of this I substitute, with the permission of the New York Central Railway, the official catalogue of their locomotives taken almost word for word from the list compiled by their superintendent of works. I admit that he wrote in hot weather. Part of it runs:

Out in the yard and steaming in the sun  
 Stands locomotive engine number forty-one;  
 Seated beside the windows of the cab  
 Are Pat McGaw and Peter James McNab.  
 Pat comes from Troy and Peter from Cohoes,  
 And when they pull the throttle off she goes;  
 And as she vanishes there comes to view  
 Steam locomotive engine number forty-two.  
 Observe her mighty wheels, her easy roll,  
 With William J. Macarthy in control.  
 They say her engineer some time ago  
 Lived on a farm outside of Buffalo  
 Whereas his fireman, Henry Edward Foy,  
 Attended School in Springfield, Illinois.  
 Thus does the race of man decay or rot—  
 Some men can hold their jobs and some can not.

Please observe that if Homer had actually written that last line it would have been quoted for a thousand years as one of the deepest sayings ever said. Orators would have rounded out their speeches with the majestic phrase, quoted in sonorous and unintelligible Greek verse, “some men can hold their jobs and some can not”: essayists would have begun their most scholarly dissertations with the words—“It has been finely said by Homer that (in Greek) ‘some men can hold their jobs’”: and the clergy in mid-pathos of a funeral

sermon would have raised their eyes aloft and echoed "Some men can not"!

This is what I should like to do. I'd like to take a large stone and write on it in very plain writing—

"The classics are only primitive literature. They belong in the same class as primitive machinery and primitive music and primitive medicine"—and then throw it through the windows of a University and hide behind a fence to see the professors buzz!!

## EDUCATION EATING UP LIFE

IN this discussion of education, I am addressing myself to plain people. By this I mean people who shudder at mathematics, go no further in Latin than *E Pluribus Unum* and take electricity as they find it. As opposed to these are the academic class who live in colleges, or in the shadow of them, and claim education as their province. But the plain people are of necessity interested in education because their sons and daughters go to college, or, more important, can't go to college.

Now the plain people have noticed that education is getting longer and longer. Fifty years ago people learned to read out of a spelling-book at six years old, went to high school at twelve, and taught school (for money) on a third-class certificate at sixteen. After that, two years in a saw-mill and two at a medical school made them doctors, or one year in a saw-mill and one in divinity fitted them for the church. For law they needed no college at all, just three summers on a farm and three winters in an office.

All our great men in North America got this education. Pragmatically, it worked. They began their real life still young. With the money they didn't spend they bought a wife. By the age of thirty they had got somewhere, or nowhere. It is true that for five years of married life, they carried, instead of a higher degree, bills for groceries, coal, doctors and babies' medicine. Then they broke out of the woods, into the sunlight, established men—at an age when their successors are still demonstrating, interning, or writing an advanced thesis on social impetus.

Now it is all changed. Children in school at six years old cut up paper dolls and make patterns. They are still in high school till eighteen, learning civics and social statistics—studies for old men. They enter college at about nineteen or twenty, take prerequisites and post-requisites in various faculties for nearly ten years, then become demonstrators, invigilators, researchers, or cling to a graduate

scholarship like a man on a raft.

At thirty they are just beginning, ten years too late. They can't marry till it's ten years too late; they have children ten years too late, and die ten years too early. They know nothing of the early life of the man who worked in saw-mills, practised medicine at twenty and married six months later, with no other property than a stethoscope and a horse and buggy; or of the young lawyer who married in debt, and lived happy in it ever after.

"Safety first" has put its stamp on life. Population begins to die at the top. And, all the time, education grows longer and longer. This does not deny that the average human life is now longer. It means that paternity is shorter. People do not see enough of their grandchildren—the sweetest prospect in the world. Life has all too little evening. It has all run in arrears and never catches up.

All this, you will say, is exaggerated, is overcoloured, is not truth. Very likely. But a half truth in argument, like a half brick, carries better. High colours show up where neutral tints blend to nothing. Yet the main truth gets over. Education is eating up life.

In the above paragraphs I have formulated the plain man's accusations against the continued lengthening of education; or, rather, I must not say his accusation. The poor fellow hasn't the spirit to accuse. It is not an accusation that he formulates or a grievance that he voices. It is just a burden that he carries.

He carries it because of the prestige of education. Round the idea of education, as effort and opportunity, there have clustered centuries of tradition and association. These are stamped in such words and phrases as "the little red schoolhouse," "the midnight oil," "the eager student," "the kindly dominie," "the absent-minded professor." With this has grown up the notion—no doubt partly true—that the harder the path of learning the higher the achievement. "There is no royal road to learning" still cheers those who are unaware that the public road itself has become overgrown with a jungle of underbrush.

In other words, people don't complain. On the contrary, they are often proud of the burden that they carry. Parents have no regrets for the fifteen years of sacrifice that they made to give their children the education they should have had in half the time.

It is a tradition with us that education opens opportunity. To

send a boy to college is an ambition that wakes to life beside a cradle. "How is your son doing at school, Mr. McGregor?" I once asked of a Scotsman of the traditional type. "Fine!" he answered. "If he keeps on as he is, we'll have to put the college to him."

Even in the clutter and failure of youth's career among the blocked avenues of our misfit world the college comes into its own as a sort of refuge. "My son," said another parent, "doesn't seem to have any particular ability, so we think we'll have to send him to college. He seems no good for anything else." The one anxiety of such parents is, "Can he get in?" Beyond that no need to look. It's like being dipped in the Jordan.

But even if the plain man were to raise his complaint against the lengthening road and the increasing burden, he would be laughed out of court by the academic class. He would be told that our education is all too short. The teachers in the high schools would say that the children come to them hopelessly unprepared and ought to stay a year longer in public school.

Every professor will tell them that the first-year students at college are simply hopeless and ought to have stayed at least a year, or call it two, at high school. The students in the second year ought never to have left the first; the third-year men haven't the proper grounding for their work; and the fourth-year are so rotten that they have to be given degrees to get rid of them. As for the graduate school, the students in it should never have been admitted; they are not yet fit for advanced work. Their minds are immature. And even when they do get out of the graduate school, by sheer lapse of time, it seems ridiculous to think of them as fit to teach, or do anything. Oh, no; they have to go to Germany for a year—anyway, to somewhere for a year—and come back with whiskers and look like something.

I once put the question of shortening the college curriculum to my old friend Dean Elderberry Foible, dean of the Faculty of Arts. You didn't know him, but there was a dean at your college just like him. "Preposterous," he said, "preposterous!" And that settled it.

If we turn from the general view to the particular subjects, the case against any attempt to shorten the curriculum becomes simply overwhelming—so much so that we are crushed and humbled in presenting it. Imagine trying to leave out mathematics—the queen



of sciences; or history—the very basis for understanding our modern life; or English literature—our legacy common to England and America, dear as the very hearthstones of our homes—who dares touch that?

Or who will dare disturb Latin, the bedrock of our culture; or foreign languages, the amenity of polite life; or geology, deep as the caverns of thought; biology, life's interpretation; or the social sciences, the key to the padlock of happiness still closed. Help! Nothing but pretentious ignorance could suggest leaving out anything. As to any shortening, ask again my friend Dean Elderberry Foible and he will tell you that you can't. "My dear sir, you may wish to, but you simply can't"—with that academic finality with which professors dismiss the ideas of students.

So it appears even to ourselves on a first survey. Take mathematics. How can you shorten the subject? That stern struggle with the multiplication table, for many people not yet ended in victory, how can you make it less? Square root, as obdurate as a hardwood stump in a pasture—nothing but years of effort can extract it. You can't hurry the process.

Or pass from arithmetic to algebra: you can't shoulder your way past quadratic equations or ripple through the binomial theorem. Indeed, the other way; your feet are impeded in the tangled growth, your pace slackens, you sink and fall somewhere near the binomial theorem with the calculus in sight on the horizon. So died, for each of us, still bravely fighting, our mathematical training; except only for a set of people called "mathematicians"—born so, like crooks. Yet would we leave mathematics out? No, we hold our cross.

Latin too: do you want your son to grow up not knowing what a *sine qua non* is, and who wrote Virgil's *Aeneid*? Then he not only needs the whole present curriculum but more! At present the student learns just enough Latin not to be able to read it; he stops short of the saturation point—just gets wet with it and no more.

But why recite the entire list? The same truth holds, for the academic profession, of every one of the subjects of the school and college course. The student is not saturated, when he ought really to be soaked.

A parallel resistance blocks the pathway leading to the professions. The idea of any immediate entry into them for a young man just

out of college is ridiculous. A hundred years ago a man just out of college looked as good as a coin fresh from the mint, a sickle from the whetstone. At twenty-seven he was a Member of Congress, had four or five children, owned three or four thousand dollars' worth of property in his own right—and owed five thousand dollars. But nowadays! Imagine trusting a serious case of illness to a young fellow of twenty-seven barely out of college, and till yesterday an interne in a hospital. Out of the question!

And, later, when at last his turn comes, it is but a brief acme of success, and then, all of a sudden, it seems people are saying, "He's too old for the job, losing his grip—in fact, he's nearly fifty." He's an "old doctor"—once a term of esteem and confidence but now equivalent to an "old horse."

Thus in our ill-fit world youth and age jostle and hurry one another together—too young and then too old. Those who follow gardening know that green peas are first too young to pick and then, overnight as it seems, too old to eat. So with our educated people. Homer long ago said, "As is the race of leaves, so is the race of men." Make it college graduates and garden peas and it still holds good.

How did all this come about? Our system of education arose out of the mediaeval Latin schools of the church. It still carries, like a fossil snake in a stone, the mark of its original structure. Not that this was the earliest kind of education. But the others were different. Greek education included music and dancing and what we call the arts. It was supposed to fit people to live. Mediaeval education was supposed to fit people to die. Any school-boy of to-day can still feel the effect of it.

Greek education was free from the problems that have beset our own. It didn't include the teaching of languages, the Greeks despising all foreigners as barbarians. It avoided everything "practical" like the plague, and would have regarded a professor of Engineering as a child of the devil, misusing truth. Mathematics, crippled by the want of symbols, became a sort of dream—intense, difficult and proudly without purpose. Greek education carried with it no "exams" and "tests" for entry to the professions. A Greek dentist didn't have to pass in Latin. He used a hammer.

Thus philosophy, "the love of knowledge," came into its own, in

talk as endless as on the porch of a Kentucky country store.

"Scholars" would deny the truth of this summary and talk of Archimedes, the world's first engineer, and Hippocrates, its earliest physician. But the proof of what I say is that Archimedes found no followers and Hippocrates waited five hundred years for Galen. Scholars always see exceptions where a plain man sees an even surface. But even a billiard ball, if you look close enough, is all covered with bumps.

Our education, then, comes down to us from the schools of the Middle Ages. These were organized by the church and the first aim was piety, not competence; the goal was the reading of the Scriptures and by that the salvation of the soul. On this basis, Alfred the Great planned schools for Saxon England. So, too, in France did Charlemagne, who couldn't read or write and felt a religious admiration for those who could—the same as an oil magnate of to-day feels toward a university.

So presently the monastic schools arose, and from their oriel windows came forth among the elm trees the sound of Latin chants intoned by choristers; and in the silent scriptorium the light from a stained window fell on the quiet "copyist" rewriting, letter by letter, in pigment upon parchment, "In the beginning was the Word." Thus passed monastic life in its quiet transition to Eternity.

These were the earliest schools—secluded, scholarly—born ancient like the "old-fashioned" children of aging parents. For the date, place them anywhere in the four hundred years from Alfred and Charlemagne to the days of Oxford and Paris.

These later schools—Oxford, Paris, and such—came when study no longer taught people how to die and keep out of hell, but how to live, as lawyers—two ambitions with an obvious relationship. Law hatched out under the wings of the church, as a duck hatches under a hen, later to horrify its parent.

Here again the vertebrate structure is still seen in the rock. Lincoln's Inn and Grey's Inn were originally, in a sense, works of God, the defunct Doctors Commons till its end a spirituality. Law, in England at least, struggled long before it shook off the hand of ghostly guidance. Even now the connection between law and religion remains in the quantity of oaths by which the business of the law secures its righteousness.

So there came, then, such schools as Oxford and Paris, which seem to have been at first huge random gatherings of students—mediaeval exaggeration puts 30,000 at Oxford in pre-record days. They had, before printing, hardly any books, and no examinations. The curriculum ran to endless discussion—more Kentucky. These “disputations” begot “tests” and awards (degrees) and brought into the world that child of sin, the written examination. A few odd people like Roger Bacon began digging into black knowledge about gunpowder, and so forth, and got put into jail for it. The lamp of learning still fell only on the Kingdom of Light, with lawyers dancing in the shadow.

The curriculum of these schools, the bedrock on which ours still rest, was the famous trinity of study, the Trivium, which meant grammar, rhetoric and logic; to this was supplemented the four further studies called the Quadrivium—music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy. All were based on the use of Latin; they comprehended the whole circuit of human knowledge, and the supreme purpose of it all was salvation. The monk Alcuin, who was Charlemagne’s “specialist” in education, has described for us how he taught his students:

*To some I administer the honey of the sacred writings; others I try to inebriate with the wine of the ancient classics. I begin the nourishment of some with the apples of grammatical subtlety. I strive to illuminate many by the arrangement of the stars, as from the painted roof of a lofty palace.*

The whole extent of human knowledge was still within human comprehension. In our own day we meet men who think they “know it all.” In the Middle Ages there were men who were sure they did. Of course, where knowledge ended superstition began, and that was infinite.

It was this curriculum which in the course of centuries has been expanded beyond recognition like the toad in Aesop that would be an ox. And still it has not burst. It drags along its huge amorphous outline, flabby as a dinosaur, over fifteen years of life.

Here is what happened to expand it. The revival of learning resuscitated Greek, a study forgotten by all but the Arabs. The rising



kingdoms that replaced feudalism brought national States and set people to learning one another's languages. The English, having forgotten French, had to learn it again. Italian became "polite." Milton suggested that one ought to learn it, "in an odd hour." Modern languages were still not a part of education, but a sort of annex; so they remained till yesterday in England where all Englishmen were supposed to "know French" from a governess and a copy of Ollendorff's *Grammar* and a trip to Boulogne. But, till yesterday, Eton, Rugby and Oxford never heard of it.

Printing, once in real use, expanded both opportunity and obligation. Students henceforth had books. Contacts with the Arabs revealed a system of decimal notation that made arithmetic a reality and algebra a power. Mathematics in the time of the Stuarts, with logarithms and the calculus, ceased to be a dream. Physics converted Alcuin's wonder of the sky into classroom formulae.

But even though mathematics in the sixteen hundreds, in the days of Newton and Descartes, had become a real and intensive study—far transcending in reach and in difficulty anything within the range of the ordinary college man of today—it was still regarded rather as an annex to learning than as learning itself. The place of priority still lay with classical study, with the literature of Greece and Rome. In this America was a faithful child of England. Our earliest college education was stamped with Roman letters, and its passion for the Bible in the wilderness made it even revert somewhat to the mediaeval type. The rules that were promulgated in 1642 for admission to Harvard College lay down the qualification thus:

*When any scholar is able to understand Tully or such like classical Latin author extempore, and to make and speak true Latin in verse and prose, suo ut aiunt Marte: and to decline perfectly the paradigms of nouns and verbs in the Greek tongue: let him then and not before be capable of admission into the college.*

For readers whose Latinity has slipped away from them, let it be explained that Tully is not Irish, but means Cicero. Earlier generations properly called Romans by their names, and not, as we have come to do, with many of them, by their nicknames. Tully was



called "Cicero" (or bean-head) as one of us might be called "Shorty." Harvard Latin in 1642 was still undefiled.

On the terms indicated few of us now would get into Harvard. Fewer still would get out, since, for that, every scholar had to be

*"found able to read the originals of the Old and New Testaments into the Latin tongue and to resolve them logically: withal being of godly life and conversation."*

On the outside edge or fringe of the classical studies, of which mathematics and logic formed an adjunct, were such things as natural philosophy, destined to vast and rapid expansion, but of which the classical doctors of divinity remained ignorant.

By the time of Queen Anne, some scholars already admitted that they didn't know everything—not many, though, or at least they qualified it by saying that what they didn't know wasn't worth knowing.

What they referred to by this last phrase was this natural philosophy, the new range of knowledge that the eighteenth century was gathering, item by item, fact by fact. These grew into the sciences of life—botany and zoology, later to get their true name of biology. Reverend classical scholars, full to the throat with declensions, set them aside as a disturbance of the Book of Genesis. But they wouldn't down.

Beside them grew, equally despised by the classicists, the electric science drawn by Franklin from the clouds, the oxygen distilled by Priestley from water, the geology of Lyell, dug up from what was once called Hades. All the world knows the story. Within another hundred years a vast series of studies known as the natural sciences—at first opposed, derided and left to mechanics and steam-engine drivers—broke at last the barriers of the schools and flooded wide over the curriculum.

But the barriers, in England at least, did not break until the waters had risen high and the pressure had become overwhelming. In the middle nineteenth century, as Professor Huxley complained, the so-called public schools had still a curriculum of the Middle Ages.

*Until a few years back [he wrote in 1893], a boy might have passed*

*through any one of the great public schools with the greatest distinction and credit and might never so much as heard of modern geography, modern history and modern literature, of the English language as a language, or of the whole circle of the sciences, physical, moral and social; might never have heard that the earth goes round the sun; that England underwent a great revolution in 1688 and France another in 1789; that there once lived certain notable men called Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Voltaire, Goethe, Schiller.*

With this protest of common sense went a certain protest of spite—as against aristocratic culture by those unable to share it. Witness Herbert Spencer's diatribe against "The Education of a Gentleman."

*Men dress their children's minds as they do their bodies in the prevailing fashion. As the Orinoco Indian puts on his paint before he leaves his hut . . . so a boy's drilling in Latin and Greek is insisted on, not because of their intrinsic value, but that he may not be disgraced by being found ignorant of them—that he may have the education of a gentleman.*

But when at last the barriers broke, the new science came in a flood, till every high school student, in America more even than in England, turned alchemist, and every class-room sputtered with electricity. And with this, in the colleges first and spreading downwards to the schools, came a still newer set of studies—the social studies, economics and politics, the mingled brood of happiness and despair, of progress and poverty that Mill and Spencer and such people let loose upon the world. So deeply have they spread that little children learn "civics" first and find out what it means after; and so widely that the Japanese have studied it from Europe and teach it to the Chinese.

And as if civics and social welfare were not enough for the already overburdened curriculum, a chariot creaking up the rough slope of Parnassus, "Business," in the form of schools of commerce, must needs leap on top of the load. It handed so heavy a tip to the driver that it could not be put off, and more than that it began to demand that the oldest and most respectable of the passengers be thrown out to make room for it.

So there we stand, or rather move slowly onward, the ascent of Parnassus turned into a ten years' journey during which the passengers must amuse themselves as best they may with the cards and dice of college activities.

Meantime it is only to be expected that the conditions of the journey react upon the minds of the passengers. In other words it is only natural that this vast burden of an increasing curriculum sets up a reaction in the minds of the pupil and the student. From their earliest years they become accustomed to reckon up the things that they have done and finished with. "We've finished Scripture," says a little girl in a child's school; "we had it last year." For her the mould of religious thought is all set. Don't ask her the names of the twelve Apostles. She's had them—last year. She is not responsible for the Apostles any more. So does the high school student count up his years still needed for matriculation as eagerly as a mariner measures his distance to the shore. The college student opens his career by classing himself not according to the year in which he enters but according to the year in which he hopes to get out. The class matriculating in 1940 call out in their infant breath, "Rah! Rah! Forty-four."

How strange it is, our little procession of life! The child says, "When I am a big boy." But what is that? The big boy says, "When I grow up." And then, grown up, he says, "When I get married." But to be married, what is that after all? The thought changes to "When I'm able to retire." And then, when retirement comes, he looks back over the landscape traversed; a cold wind seems to sweep over it; somehow he has missed it all, and it is gone. Life, we learn too late, is in the living, in the tissue of every day and hour. So it should be with education.

But so it is not; a false view discolours it all. For the vastly great part of it the student's one aim is to get done with it. There comes a glad time in his life when he has "finished" mathematics, a happy day when he has done philosophy, an exhilarating hour when he realizes that he is finished with "compulsory English." Then at last his four years are out, his sentence expired, and he steps out of college a free man, without a stain on his character—and not much on his mind. . . . Later on, he looks back wistfully and realizes how different it might have been.

## SOFTENING THE STORIES FOR THE CHILDREN

WHAT is the story that you are reading, Peggy?" I asked of a wide-eyed child of eight, who sat buried in a story book.

"Little Red Riding Hood," she answered.

"Have you come to the part," I asked, "where the grandmother gets eaten?"

"She didn't get eaten!" the child protested in surprise.

"Yes—the wolf comes to her cottage and knocks at the door and she thinks that it is Little Red Riding Hood and opens the door and the wolf eats her."

She shook her head.

"That's not it at all in this book," she said.

So I took a look at the page before her and I read:

"Then the wolf pushed open the door of the cottage and rushed in but the grandmother was not there as she happened not to be at home."

Exactly! The grandmother, being a truly up-to-date grandmother, was probably out on the golf links, or playing bridge with a few other grandmothers like herself.

At any rate she was not there and so she escaped getting eaten by the wolf. In other words, Little Red Riding Hood, like all the good old stories that have come down from the bad old times, is having to give way to the tendencies of a human age. It is supposed to be too horrible for the children to read. The awful fate of the grandmother, chewed up by the wolf—or, no, swallowed *whole* like a Malpecque oyster, is too terrible for them to hear. So the story, like a hundred other stories and pictures, has got to be censored, re-edited, and incidentally—spoiled.

All of which rests on a fundamental error as to literature and as to



children. There is no need to soften down a story for them. They like it rough.

"In the real story," I said to the little girl, "the grandmother was at home, and the wolf rushed in and ate her in one mouthful!"

"Oh! that's *much* better!" she exclaimed.

"And then, afterwards, when the hunters came in, they killed the wolf and cut his stomach open and the grandmother jumped out and was saved!"

"Oh, isn't that splendid!" cried the child.

In other words, all the terror that grown-up people see in this sort of story is there for grown-up people only. The children look clean over it, or past it, or under it. In reality, the vision of the grandmother feebly defending herself against the savage beast, or perhaps leaping round the room to get away from him, and jumping up on top of the grandfather's clock—is either horrible, or weird, or pathetic, or even comic, as we may happen to see it. But to the children it is just a story—and a good one—that's all.

And all the old stories are the same! Consider Jack the Giant-Killer. What a conglomeration of weeping and wailing, of people shut into low dungeons, of murder, of sudden death, of blood, and of horror! Jack, having inveigled an enormous giant into eating an enormous quantity of porridge, then rips him up the stomach with a huge sword! What a mess!

But it doesn't disturb Jack or his young readers one iota. In fact, Jack is off again at once with his young readers trailing eagerly after him, in order to cut off at one blow the three huge heads of a three-headed giant and make a worse mess still.

From the fairy stories and the giant stories the children presently pass on—quite unscathed as I see it—to the higher range of the blood-and-thunder stories of the pirates and the battles. Here again the reality, for the grown-up mind that can see it, is terrible and gruesome; but never so for the boys and girls who see in it only the pleasant adventure and bright diversity.

Take, for instance, this familiar scene as it appears and reappears in the history of Jack Dare-devil, or Ned Fear-nothing, or any of those noble boys who go to sea, in books, at the age of fourteen and retire, as admirals, at twenty-two.

"The fire from both ships was now becoming warm. A round shot



tearing across the deck swept off four of our fellows. 'Ha! ha!' said Jack, as he turned towards Ned on the quarterdeck, 'this bids fair to become lively.' "

It certainly did. In fact, it would be lively already if one stopped to think of the literal and anatomical meaning of a round shot—twenty-five pounds of red-hot iron—tearing through the vitals of four men. But the boy reader never gets it this way. What is said is, that four of our fellows were "swept off"—just that; merely "swept off" and that's the way the child reader takes it. And when the pirates "leap on deck," Jack himself "cuts down" four of them and Ned "cuts down" three. That's all they do—"they cut them down," they just "shorten them" so to speak.

Very similar in scope and method was the good old "half-dime novel," written of the days of the "prairie," and the mountain trail, the Feathered Indian and the Leathered Scout. In these, unsuspecting strangers got scalped in what is now the main street of Denver—where they get skinned.

These stories used to open with a rush and kept in rapid oscillation all the time. In fact they began with the concussion of firearms.

"'Bang! Bang! Bang!' Three shots rang out over the prairie and three feathered Indians bit the dust."

It seemed always to be a favourite pastime of the Indians—"biting dust."

In grim reality—to the grown-up mind—these were stories of terror—of midnight attack, of stealthy murder with a knife from without the folds of the tent, of sudden death in dark caverns, of pitiless enemies, and of cruel torture.

But not so to the youthful mind. He followed it all through quite gayly, sharing the high courage of his hero—Dick Danger the Dauntless. "I must say," whispered Dick to Ned (this was when the Indians had them tied to a tree and were piling grass and sticks round it so as to burn them alive), "I must say, old man, things begin to look critical. Unless we can think of some way out of this fix, we are lost."

Notice, please, this word "lost": in reality they would be worse than lost. They'd be *cooked*. But in this class of literature the word "lost" is used to cover up a multitude of things. And, of course, Dick does think of a way out. It occurs to him that by moving his hands he can slip off the thongs that bind him, set Ned free, leap from

the tree to the back of a horse, of two horses, and then by jumping over the edge of a chasm into the forest a thousand feet below, they can find themselves in what is called "comparative safety." After which the story goes calmly on, oblivious of the horrible scene that nearly brought it to an end.

But as the modern parent and the modern teacher have grown alarmed, the art of story-telling for children has got to be softened down. There must be no more horror and blood and violent death. Away with the giants and the ogres! Let us have instead the stories of the animal kingdom in which Wee-Wee the Mouse has tea on a broad leaf with Goo-Goo the Caterpillar, and in which Fuzzy the Skunk gives talks on animal life that would do for Zoology Class I at Harvard.

But do we—do they—can we escape after all from the cruel environment that makes up the life in which we live? Are the animals after all so much softer than the ogres, so much kinder than the pirates? When Slick the Cat crackles up the bones of Wee-Wee the Mouse, how does that stand! And when Old Mr. Hawk hovers in the air watching for Cheep-Cheep the chicken who tries in vain to hide under the grass, and calls for its lost mother—how is that for terror! To my thinking the timorous and imaginative child can get more real terror from the pictured anguish of a hunted animal than from the deaths of all the Welsh giants that ever lived on Plynlimmon.

The tears of childhood fall fast and easily, and evil be to him who makes them flow.

How easily a child will cry over the story of a little boy lost, how easily at the tale of poverty and want, how inconsolably at death. Touch but ever so lightly these real springs of anguish and the ready tears will come. But at Red Riding Hood's grandmother! Never! She didn't *die*! She was merely *eaten*. And the sailors, and the pirates, and the Apache Indians! They don't *die*, not in any real sense to the child. They are merely "swept off," and "mowed down"—in fact, scattered like the pieces on an upset chessboard.

The moral of all which is, don't worry about the apparent terror and bloodshed in the children's books, the real children's books. There is none there. It only represents the way in which little children, from generation to generation, learn in ways as painless as can be followed, the stern environment of life and death.

## OXFORD AS I SEE IT

MY private station being that of a university professor, I was naturally deeply interested in the system of education in England. I was therefore led to make a special visit to Oxford and to submit the place to a searching scrutiny. Arriving one afternoon at four o'clock, I stayed at the Mitre Hotel and did not leave until eleven o'clock next morning. The whole of this time, except for one hour spent in addressing the undergraduates, was devoted to a close and eager study of the great university. When I add to this that I had already visited Oxford in 1907 and spent a Sunday at All Souls with Colonel L. S. Amery, it will be seen at once that my views on Oxford are based upon observations extending over fourteen years.

At any rate I can at least claim that my acquaintance with the British university is just as good a basis for reflection and judgment as that of the numerous English critics who come to our side of the water. I have known a famous English author to arrive at Harvard University in the morning, have lunch with President Lowell, and then write a whole chapter on the Excellence of Higher Education in America. I have known another one come to Harvard, have lunch with President Lowell, and do an entire book on the Decline of Serious Study in America. Or take the case of my own university. I remember Mr. Rudyard Kipling coming to McGill and saying in his address to the undergraduates at 2.30 P.M., "You have here a great institution." But how could he have gathered this information? As far as I know he spent the entire morning with Sir Andrew Macphail in his house beside the campus, smoking cigarettes. When I add that he distinctly refused to visit the Palaeontologic Museum, that he saw nothing of our new hydraulic apparatus, or of our classes in Domestic Science, his judgment that we had here a great institution seems a little bit superficial. I can only put beside it, to redeem it in some measure, the hasty and ill-formed judgment expressed by Lord Milner, "McGill is a noble university": and the rash and in-

discreet expression of the Prince of Wales, when we gave him an LL.D. degree, "McGill has a glorious future."

To my mind these unthinking judgments about our great college do harm, and I determined, therefore, that anything that I said about Oxford should be the result of the actual observation and real study based upon a bona fide residence in the Mitre Hotel.

On the strength of this basis of experience I am prepared to make the following positive and emphatic statements. Oxford is a noble university. It has a great past. It is at present the greatest university in the world: and it is quite possible that it has a great future. Oxford trains scholars of the real type better than any other place in the world. Its methods are antiquated. It despises science. Its lectures are rotten. It has professors who never teach and students who never learn. It has no order, no arrangement, no system. Its curriculum is unintelligible. It has no president. It has no state legislature to tell it how to teach, and yet—it gets there. Whether we like it or not, Oxford gives something to its students, a life and a mode of thought, which in America as yet we can emulate but not equal.

If anybody doubts this let him go and take a room at the Mitre Hotel (ten and six for a wainscotted bedroom, period of Charles I) and study the place for himself.

These singular results achieved at Oxford are all the more surprising when one considers the distressing conditions under which the students work. The lack of an adequate building fund compels them to go on working in the same old buildings which they have had for centuries. The buildings at Brasenose College have not been renewed since the year 1525. In New College and Magdalen the students are still housed in the old buildings erected in the sixteenth century. At Christ Church I was shown a kitchen which had been built at the expense of Cardinal Wolsey in 1527. Incredible though it may seem, they have no other place to cook in than this and are compelled to use it to-day. On the day when I saw this kitchen, four cooks were busy roasting an ox whole for the students' lunch: this at least is what I presumed they were doing from the size of the fire-place used, but it may not have been an ox; perhaps it was a cow. On a huge table, twelve feet by six and made of slabs of wood five inches thick, two other cooks were rolling out a game pie. I



estimated it as measuring three feet across. In this rude way, unchanged since the time of Henry VIII, the unhappy Oxford students are fed. I could not help contrasting it with the cosy little boarding houses on Cottage Grove Avenue where I used to eat when I was a student at Chicago, or the charming little basement dining-rooms of the students' boarding houses in Toronto. But then, of course, Henry VIII never lived in Toronto.

The same lack of a building-fund necessitates the Oxford students living in the identical old boarding houses they had in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Technically they are called "quadrangles," "closes" and "rooms"; but I am so broken in to the usage of my student days that I can't help calling them boarding houses. In many of these the old stairway has been worn down by the feet of ten generations of students: the windows have little latticed panes: there are old names carved here and there upon the stone, and a thick growth of ivy covers the walls. The boarding house at St. John's College dates from 1509, the one at Christ Church from the same period. A few hundred thousand pounds would suffice to replace these old buildings with neat steel and brick structures like the normal school at Schenectady, N. Y., or the Peel Street High School at Montreal. But nothing is done. A movement was indeed attempted last autumn towards removing the ivy from the walls, but the result was unsatisfactory and they are putting it back. Any one could have told them beforehand that the mere removal of the ivy would not brighten Oxford up, unless at the same time one cleared the stones of the old inscriptions, put in steel fire-escapes, and in fact brought the boarding houses up to date.

But Henry VIII being dead, nothing was done. Yet in spite of its dilapidated buildings and its lack of fire-escapes, ventilation, sanitation, and up-to-date kitchen facilities, I persist in my assertion that I believe that Oxford, in its way, is the greatest university in the world. I am aware that this is an extreme statement and needs explanation. Oxford is much smaller in numbers, for example, than the State University of Minnesota, and is much poorer. It has, or had till yesterday, fewer students than the University of Toronto. To mention Oxford beside the 26,000 students of Columbia University sounds ridiculous. In point of money, the \$39,000,000 endowment of the University of Chicago, and the \$35,000,000 one of Co-



lumbia, and the \$43,000,000 of Harvard seem to leave Oxford nowhere. Yet the peculiar thing is that it is not nowhere. By some queer process of its own it seems to get there every time. It was therefore of the very greatest interest to me, as a profound scholar, to try to investigate just how this peculiar excellence of Oxford arises.

It can hardly be due to anything in the curriculum or programme of studies. Indeed, to any one accustomed to the best models of a university curriculum as it flourishes in the United States and Canada, the programme of studies is frankly quite laughable. There is less Applied Science in the place than would be found with us in a theological college. Hardly a single professor at Oxford would recognize a dynamo if he met it in broad daylight. The Oxford student learns nothing of chemistry, physics, heat, plumbing, electric wiring, gas-fitting or the use of a blow-torch. Any American college student can run a motor car, take a gasoline engine to pieces, fix a washer on a kitchen tap, mend a broken electric bell, and give an expert opinion on what has gone wrong with the furnace. It is these things indeed which stamp him as a college man, and occasion a very pardonable pride in the minds of his parents. But in all these things the Oxford student is the merest amateur.

This is bad enough. But after all one might say this is only the mechanical side of education. True: but one searches in vain in the Oxford curriculum for any adequate recognition of the higher and more cultural studies. Strange though it seems to us on this side of the Atlantic, there are no courses at Oxford in Housekeeping, or in Salesmanship, or in Advertising, or on Comparative Religion, or on the influence of the Press. There are no lectures whatever on Human Behaviour, on Altruism, on Egotism, or on the Play of Wild Animals. Apparently, the Oxford student does not learn these things. This cuts him off from a great deal of the larger culture of our side of the Atlantic. "What are you studying this year?" I once asked a fourth-year student at one of our great colleges. "I am electing Salesmanship and Religion," he answered. Here was a young man whose training was destined inevitably to turn him into a moral business man: either that or nothing. At Oxford Salesmanship is not taught and Religion takes the feeble form of the New Testament. The more one looks at these things the more amazing it becomes that Oxford can produce any results at all.

The effect of the comparison is heightened by the peculiar position occupied at Oxford by the professors' lectures. In the colleges of Canada and the United States the lectures are supposed to be a really necessary and useful part of the student's training. Again and again I have heard the graduates of my own college assert that they had got as much, or nearly as much, out of the lectures at college as out of athletics or the Greek letter society or the Banjo and Mandolin Club. In short, with us the lectures form a real part of the college life. At Oxford it is not so. The lectures, I understand, are given and may even be taken. But they are quite worthless and are not supposed to have anything much to do with the development of the student's mind. "The lectures here," said a Canadian student to me, "are punk." I appealed to another student to know if this was so. "I don't know whether I'd call them exactly punk," he answered, "but they're certainly rotten." Other judgments were that the lectures were of no importance: that nobody took them: that they don't matter: that you can take them if you like: that they do you no harm.

It appears further that the professors themselves are not keen on their lectures. If the lectures are called for they give them; if not, the professor's feelings are not hurt. He merely waits and rests his brain until in some later year the students call for his lectures. There are men at Oxford who have rested their brains this way for over thirty years: the accumulated brain power thus dammed up is said to be colossal.

I understand that the key to this mystery is found in the operations of the person called the tutor. It is from him, or rather with him, that the students learn all that they know: one and all are agreed on that. Yet it is a little odd to know just how he does it. "We go over to his rooms," said one student, "and he just lights a pipe and talks to us." "We sit round with him," said another, "and he simply smokes and goes over our exercises with us." From this and other evidence I gather that what an Oxford tutor does is to get a little group of students together and smoke at them. Men who have been systematically smoked at for four years turn into ripe scholars. If anybody doubts this, let him go to Oxford and he can see the thing actually in operation. A well-smoked man speaks and writes English with a grace that can be acquired in no other way.

In what was said above, I seem to have been directing criticism against the Oxford professors as such: but I have no intention of doing so. For the Oxford professor and his whole manner of being I have nothing but a profound respect. There is indeed the greatest difference between the modern up-to-date American idea of a professor and the English type. But even with us in older days, in the bygone time when such people as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow were professors, one found the English idea; a professor was supposed to be a venerable kind of person, with snow-white whiskers reaching to his stomach. He was expected to moon around the campus oblivious of the world around him. If you nodded to him he failed to see you. Of money he knew nothing; of business, far less. He was, as his trustees were proud to say of him, "a child."

On the other hand he contained within him a reservoir of learning of such depth as to be practically bottomless. None of this learning was supposed to be of any material or commercial benefit to anybody. Its use was in saving the soul and enlarging the mind.

At the head of such a group of professors was one whose beard was even whiter and longer, whose absence of mind was even still greater, and whose knowledge of money, business, and practical affairs was below zero. Him they made the president.

All this is changed in America. A university professor is now a busy, hustling person, approximating as closely to a business man as he can do it. It is on the business man that he models himself. He has a little place that he calls his "office," with a typewriter machine and a stenographer. Here he sits and dictates letters, beginning after the best business models, "in re yours of the eighth ult., would say, etc., etc." He writes these letters to students, to his fellow professors, to the president, indeed to any people who will let him write to them. The number of letters that he writes each month is duly counted and set to his credit. If he writes enough he will get a reputation as an "executive," and big things may happen to him. He may even be asked to step out of the college and take a post as an "executive" in a soap company or an advertising firm. The man, in short, is a "hustler," an "advertiser" whose highest aim is to be a "live-wire." If he is not, he will presently be dismissed, or, to use the business term, be "let go," by a board of trustees who are themselves hustlers and live-wires. As to the professor's soul, he no longer

needs to think of it as it has been handed over along with all the others to a Board of Censors.

The American professor deals with his students according to his lights. It is his business to chase them along over a prescribed ground at a prescribed pace like a flock of sheep. They all go humping together over the hurdles with the professor chasing them with a set of "tests" and "recitations," "marks" and "attendances," the whole apparatus obviously copied from the time-clock of the business man's factory. This process is what is called "showing results." The pace set is necessarily that of the slowest, and thus results in what I have heard Mr. Edward Beatty describe as the "convoy system of education."

In my own opinion, reached after fifty-two years of profound reflection, this system contains in itself the seeds of destruction. It puts a premium on dulness and a penalty on genius. It circumscribes that latitude of mind which is the real spirit of learning. If we persist in it we shall presently find that true learning will fly away from our universities and will take rest wherever some individual and enquiring mind can mark out its path for itself.

Now the principal reason why I am led to admire Oxford is that the place is little touched as yet by the measuring of "results," and by this passion for visible and probable "efficiency." The whole system at Oxford is such as to put a premium on genius and to let mediocrity and dulness go their way. On the dull student Oxford, after a proper lapse of time, confers a degree which means nothing more than that he lived and breathed at Oxford and kept out of jail. This for many students is as much as society can expect. But for the gifted students Oxford offers great opportunities. There is no question of his hanging back till the last sheep has jumped over the fence. He need wait for no one. He may move forward as fast as he likes, following the bent of his genius. If he has in him any ability beyond that of the common herd, his tutor, interested in his studies, will smoke at him until he kindles him into a flame. For the tutor's soul is not harassed by herding dull students, with dismissal hanging by a thread over his head in the class room. The American professor has no time to be interested in a clever student. He has time to be interested in his "deportment," his letter-writing, his executive work, and his organizing ability and his hope of promotion to a soap fac-



tory. But with that his mind is exhausted. The student of genius merely means to him a student who gives no trouble, who passes all his "tests," and is present at all his "recitations." Such a student also, if he can be trained to be a hustler and an advertiser, will undoubtedly "make good." But beyond that the professor does not think of him. The everlasting principle of equality has inserted itself in a place where it has no right to be, and where inequality is the breath of life.

American or Canadian college trustees would be horrified at the notion of professors who apparently do no work, give few or no lectures and draw their pay merely for existing. Yet these are really the only kind of professors worth having—I mean, men who can be trusted with a vague general mission in life, with a salary guaranteed at least till their death, and a sphere of duties entrusted solely to their own consciences and the promptings of their own desires. Such men are rare, but a single one of them, when found, is worth ten "executives" and a dozen "organizers."

The excellence of Oxford, then, as I see it, lies in the peculiar vagueness of the organization of its work. It starts from the assumption that the professor is a really learned man whose sole interest lies in his own sphere: and that a student, or at least the only student with whom the university cares to reckon seriously, is a young man who desires to know. This is an ancient mediaeval attitude long since buried in more up-to-date places under successive strata of compulsory education, state teaching, the democratization of knowledge and the substitution of the shadow for the substance, and the casket for the gem. No doubt, in newer places the thing has got to be so. Higher education in America flourishes chiefly as a qualification for entrance into a money-making profession, and not as a thing in itself. But in Oxford one can still see the surviving outline of a nobler type of structure and a higher inspiration.

I do not mean to say, however, that my judgment of Oxford is one undiluted stream of praise. In one respect at least I think that Oxford has fallen away from the high ideals of the Middle Ages. I refer to the fact that it admits women students to its studies. In the Middle Ages women were regarded with a peculiar chivalry long since lost. It was taken for granted that their brains were too delicately poised to allow them to learn anything. It was presumed that



their minds were so exquisitely hung that intellectual effort might disturb them. The present age has gone to the other extreme: and this is seen nowhere more than in the crowding of women into colleges originally designed for men. Oxford, I regret to find, has not stood out against this change.

To a profound scholar like myself, the presence of these young women, many of them most attractive, flitting up and down the streets of Oxford in their caps and gowns, is very distressing.

Who is to blame for this and how they first got in I do not know. But I understand that they first of all built a private college of their own close to Oxford, and then edged themselves in foot by foot. If this is so they only followed up the precedent of the recognized method in use in America. When an American college is established, the women go and build a college of their own overlooking the grounds. Then they put on becoming caps and gowns and stand and look over the fence at the college athletics. The male undergraduates, who were originally and by nature a hardy lot, were not easily disturbed. But inevitably some of the senior trustees fell in love with the first year girls and became convinced that coeducation was a noble cause. American statistics show that between 1880 and 1900 the number of trustees and senior professors who married girl undergraduates or who wanted to do so reached a percentage of—I forget the exact percentage; it was either a hundred or a little over.

I don't know just what happened at Oxford but presumably something of the sort took place. In any case the women are now all over the place. They attend the college lectures, they row in a boat, and they preambulate the High Street. They are even offering a serious competition against the men. Last year they carried off the ping-pong championship and took the chancellor's prize for needlework, while in music, cooking and millinery the men are said to be nowhere.

There is no doubt that unless Oxford puts the women out while there is yet time, they will overrun the whole university. What this means to the progress of learning few can tell and those who know are afraid to say.

Cambridge University, I am glad to see, still sets its face sternly against this innovation. I am reluctant to count any superiority in the University of Cambridge. Having twice visited Oxford, having

made the place a subject of profound study for many hours at a time, having twice addressed its undergraduates, and having stayed at the Mitre Hotel, I consider myself an Oxford man. But I must admit that Cambridge has chosen the wiser part.

Last autumn, while I was in London on my voyage of discovery, a vote was taken at Cambridge to see if the women who have already a private college nearby, should be admitted to the university. They were triumphantly shut out; and as a fit and proper sign of enthusiasm the undergraduates went over in a body and knocked down the gates of the women's college. I know that it is a terrible thing to say that any one approved of this. All the London papers came out with headings that read—ARE OUR UNDERGRADUATES TURNING INTO BABOONS? and so on. The *Manchester Guardian* draped its pages in black and even the *London Morning Post* was afraid to take bold ground in the matter. But I do know also that there was a great deal of secret chuckling and jubilation in the London clubs. Nothing was expressed openly. The men of England have been too terrorized by the women for that. But in safe corners of the club, out of ear-shot of the waiters and away from casual strangers, little groups of elderly men chuckled quietly together. "Knocked down their gates, eh?" said the wicked old men to one another, and then whispered guiltily behind an uplifted hand, "Serve 'em right." Nobody dared to say anything outside. If they had some one would have got up and asked a question in the House of Commons. When this is done all England falls flat upon its face.

But for my part when I heard of the Cambridge vote, I felt as Lord Chatham did when he said in parliament, "Sir, I rejoice that America has resisted." For I have long harboured views of my own upon the higher education of women. In these days, however, it requires no little hardihood to utter a single word of criticism against it. It is like throwing half a brick through the glass roof of a conservatory. It is bound to make trouble. Let me hasten, therefore, to say that I believe most heartily in the higher education of women; in fact, the higher the better. The only question to my mind is: What is "higher education" and how do you get it? With which goes the secondary enquiry, What is a woman and is she just the same as a man? I know that it sounds a terrible thing to say in these days, but I don't believe she is.

Let me say also that when I speak of coeducation I speak of what I know. I was coeducated myself some thirty-five years ago, at the very beginning of the thing. I learned my Greek alongside of a bevy of beauty on the opposite benches that mashed up the irregular verbs for us very badly. Incidentally, those girls are all married long since, and all the Greek they know now you could put under a thimble. But of that presently.

I have had further experience as well. I spent three years in the graduate school of Chicago, where coeducational girls were as thick as autumn leaves—and some thicker. And as a college professor at McGill University in Montreal, I have taught mingled classes of men and women for twenty years.

On the basis of which experience I say with assurance that the thing is a mistake and has nothing to recommend it but its relative cheapness. Let me emphasize this last point and have done with it. Coeducation is of course a great economy. To teach ten men and ten women in a single class of twenty costs only half as much as to teach two classes. Where economy must rule, then, the thing has got to be. But where the discussion turns not on what is cheapest, but on what is best, then the case is entirely different.

The fundamental trouble is that men and women are different creatures, with different minds and different aptitudes and different paths in life. There is no need to raise here the question of which is superior and which is inferior (though I think, the Lord help me, I know the answer to that too). The point lies in the fact that they are different.

But the mad passion for equality has masked this obvious fact. When women began to demand, quite rightly, a share in higher education, they took for granted that they wanted the same curriculum as the men. They never stopped to ask whether their aptitudes were not in various directions higher and better than those of the men, and whether it might not be better for their sex to cultivate the things which were best suited to their minds. Let me be more explicit. In all that goes with physical and mathematical science, women, on the average, are far below the standard of men. There are, of course, exceptions. But they prove nothing. It is no use to quote to me the case of some brilliant girl who stood first in physics at Cornell. That's nothing. There is an elephant in the zoo

that can count up to ten, yet I refuse to reckon myself his inferior.

Tabulated results spread over years, and the actual experience of those who teach show that in the whole domain of mathematics and physics women are outclassed. At McGill the girls of our first year have wept over their failures in elementary physics these twenty-five years. It is time that some one dried their tears and took away the subject.

But, in any case, examination tests are never the whole story. To those who know, a written examination is far from being a true criterion of capacity. It demands too much of mere memory, imitateness, and the insidious willingness to absorb other people's ideas. Parrots and crows would do admirably in examinations. Indeed, the colleges are full of them.

But take, on the other hand, all that goes with the aesthetic side of education, with imaginative literature and the cult of beauty. Here women are, or at least ought to be, the superiors of men. Women were in primitive times the first story-tellers. They are still so at the cradle side. The original college woman was the witch, with her incantations and her prophecies and the glow of her bright imagination, and if brutal men of duller brains had not burned it out of her, she would be incanting still. To my thinking, we need more witches in the colleges and less physics.

I have seen such young witches myself—if I may keep the word: I like it—in colleges such as Wellesley in Massachusetts and Bryn Mawr in Pennsylvania, where there isn't a man allowed within the three mile limit. To my mind, they do infinitely better thus by themselves. They are freer, less restrained. They discuss things openly in their classes; they lift up their voices, and they speak, whereas a girl in such a place as McGill, with men all about her, sits for four years as silent as a frog full of shot.

But there is a deeper trouble still. The careers of the men and women who go to college together are necessarily different, and the preparation is all aimed at the man's career. The men are going to be lawyers, doctors, engineers, business men, and politicians. And the women are not.

There is no use pretending about it. It may sound an awful thing to say, but the women are going to be married. That is, and always has been, their career; and, what is more, they know it; and even at



college, while they are studying algebra and political economy, they have their eye on it sideways all the time. The plain fact is that, after a girl has spent four years of her time and a great deal of her parents' money in equipping herself for a career that she is never going to have, the wretched creature goes and gets married, and in a few years she has forgotten which is the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle, and she doesn't care. She has much better things to think of.

At this point some one will shriek: "But surely, even for marriage, isn't it right that a girl should have a college education?" To which I hasten to answer: most assuredly. I freely admit that a girl who knows algebra, or once knew it, is a far more charming companion and a nobler wife and mother than a girl who doesn't know  $x$  from  $y$ . But the point is that: Does the higher education that fits a man to be a lawyer also fit a person to be a wife and mother? Or, in other words, is a lawyer a wife and mother? I say he is not. Granted that a girl is to spend four years in time and four thousand dollars in money in going to college, why train her for a career that she is never going to adopt? Why not give her an education that will have a meaning and a harmony with the real life that she is to follow?

For example, suppose that during her four years every girl lucky enough to get a higher education spent at least six months of it in the training and discipline of a hospital as a nurse. There is more education and character-making in that than in a whole bucketful of algebra.

But no, the woman insists on snatching her share of an education designed by Erasmus or William of Wykeham or William of Occam for the creation of scholars and lawyers; and when later on in her home there is a sudden sickness or accident, and the life or death of those nearest to her hangs upon skill and knowledge and a trained fortitude in emergency, she must needs send in all haste for a hired woman to fill the place that she herself has never learned to occupy.

But I am not here trying to elaborate a whole curriculum. I am only trying to indicate that higher education for the man is one thing, for the woman another. Nor do I deny the fact that women have got to earn their living. Their higher education must enable them to do that. They cannot all marry on their graduation day.



But that is no great matter. No scheme of education that any one is likely to devise will fail in this respect.

The positions that they hold as teachers or civil servants they would fill all the better if their education were fitted to their wants.

Some few, a small minority, really and truly "have a career"—husbandless and childless—in which the sacrifice is great and the honour to them, perhaps, all the higher. And others no doubt dream of a career in which a husband and a group of blossoming children are carried as an appendage to a busy life at the bar or on the platform. But all such are the mere minority, so small as to make no difference to the general argument.

But there—I have written quite enough to make plenty of trouble except perhaps at Cambridge University. So I return with relief to my general study of Oxford. Viewing the situation as a whole, I am led then to the conclusion that there must be something in the life of Oxford itself that makes for higher learning. Smoked at by his tutor, fed in Henry VIII's kitchen, and sleeping in a tangle of ivy, the student evidently gets something not easily obtained in America. And the more I reflect on the matter the more I am convinced that it is the sleeping in the ivy that does it. How different it is from student life as I remember it!

When I was a student at the University of Toronto thirty years ago, I lived—from start to finish—in seventeen different boarding houses. As far as I am aware these houses have not, or not yet, been marked with tablets. But they are still to be found in the vicinity of McCaul and Darcy, and St. Patrick Streets. Any one who doubts the truth of what I have to say may go and look at them.

I was not alone in the nomadic life that I led. There were hundreds of us drifting about in this fashion from one melancholy habitation to another. We lived as a rule two or three in the house, sometimes alone. We dined in the basement. We always had beef, done up in some way after it was dead, and there were always soda biscuits on the table. They used to have a brand of soda biscuits in those days in the Toronto boarding houses that I have not seen since. They were better than dog biscuits but with not so much snap. My contemporaries will all remember them. A great many of the leading barristers and professional men of Toronto were fed on them.

In the life we led we had practically no opportunities for association on a large scale, no common rooms, no reading rooms, nothing. We never saw the magazines—personally I didn't even know the names of them. The only interchange of ideas we ever got was by going over to the Caer Howell Hotel on University Avenue and interchanging them there.

I mention these melancholy details not for their own sake but merely to emphasize the point that when I speak of students' dormitories, and the larger life which they offer, I speak of what I know.

If we had had at Toronto, when I was a student, the kind of dormitories and dormitory life that they have at Oxford, I don't think I would ever have graduated. I'd have been there still. The trouble is that the universities on our Continent are only just waking up to the idea of what a university should mean. They were, very largely, instituted and organized with the idea that a university was a place where young men were sent to absorb the contents of books and to listen to lectures in the class rooms. The student was pictured as a pallid creature, burning what was called the "midnight oil," his wan face bent over his desk. If you wanted to do something for him you gave him a book: if you wanted to do something really large on his behalf you gave him a whole basketful of them. If you wanted to go still further and be a benefactor to the college at large, you endowed a competitive scholarship and set two or more pallid students working themselves to death to get it.

The real thing for the student is the life and environment that surrounds him. All that he really learns he learns, in a sense, by the active operation of his own intellect and not as the passive recipient of lectures. And for this active operation what he really needs most is the continued and intimate contact with his fellows. Students must live together and eat together, talk and smoke together. Experience shows that that is how their minds really grow. And they must live together in a rational and comfortable way. They must eat in a big dining room or hall, with oak beams across the ceiling, and the stained glass in the windows, and with a shield or tablet here or there upon the wall, to remind them between times of the men who went before them and left a name worthy of the memory of the college. If a student is to get from his college what it ought to give him, a college dormitory, with the life in common that it

brings, is his absolute right. A university that fails to give it to him is cheating him.

If I were founding a university—and I say it with all the seriousness of which I am capable—I would found first a smoking room; then when I had a little more money in hand I would found a dormitory; then after that, or more probably with it, a decent reading room and a library. After that, if I still had money over that I couldn't use, I would hire a professor and get some text books.

This chapter has sounded in the most part like a continuous eulogy of Oxford with but little in favour of our American colleges. I turn therefore with pleasure to the more congenial task of showing what is wrong with Oxford and with the English university system generally, and the aspect in which our American universities far excel the British.

The point is that Henry VIII is dead. The English are so proud of what Henry VIII and the benefactors of earlier centuries did for the universities that they forget the present. There is little or nothing in England to compare with the magnificent generosity of individuals, provinces and states, which is building up the colleges of the United States and Canada. There used to be. But by some strange confusion of thought the English people admire the noble gifts of Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII and Queen Margaret, and do not realize that the Carnegies and Rockefellers and the William Macdonalds are the Cardinal Wolseys of to-day. The University of Chicago was founded upon oil. McGill University rests largely on a basis of tobacco. In America the world of commerce and business levies on itself a noble tribute in favour of the higher learning. In England, with a few conspicuous exceptions, such as that at Bristol, there is little of the sort. The feudal families are content with what their remote ancestors have done: they do not try to emulate it in any great degree.

In the long run this must count. Of all the various reforms that are talked of at Oxford, and of all the imitations of American methods that are suggested, the only one worth while, to my thinking, is to capture a few millionaires, give them honorary degrees at a million pounds sterling apiece, and tell them to imagine that they are Henry VIII. I give Oxford warning that if this is not done the place will not last another two centuries.

## THE READING PUBLIC

WISH to look about the store? Oh, oh, by all means, sir," he said.

Then as he rubbed his hands together in an urbane fashion he directed a piercing glance at me through his spectacles.

"You'll find some things that might interest you," he said, "in the back of the store on the left. We have there a series of reprints—*Universal Knowledge from Aristotle to Arthur Balfour*—at seventeen cents. Or perhaps you might like to look over the *Pantheon of Dead Authors* at ten cents. Mr. Sparrow," he called, "just show this gentleman our classical reprints—the ten-cent series."

With that he waved his hand to an assistant and dismissed me from his thought.

In other words, he had divined me in a moment. There was no use in my having bought a sage-green fedora in Broadway, and a sporting tie done up crosswise with spots as big as nickels. These little adornments can never hide the soul within. I was a professor, and he knew it, or at least, as part of his business, he could divine it on the instant.

The sales manager of the biggest book store for ten blocks cannot be deceived in a customer. And he knew, of course, that, as a professor, I was no good. I had come to the store, as all professors go to book stores, just as a wasp comes to an open jar of marmalade. He knew that I would hang around for two hours, get in everybody's way, and finally buy a cheap reprint of the *Dialogues of Plato*, or the *Prose Works of John Milton*, or *Locke on the Human Understanding*, or some trash of that sort.

As for real taste in literature—the ability to appreciate at its worth a dollar-fifty novel of last month, in a spring jacket with a tango frontispiece—I hadn't got it and he knew it.

He despised me, of course. But it is a maxim of the book business that a professor standing up in a corner buried in a book looks well in a store. The real customers like it.



So it was that even so up-to-date a manager as Mr. Sellyer tolerated my presence in a back corner of his store: and so it was that I had an opportunity of noting something of his methods with his real customers—methods so successful, I may say, that he is rightly looked upon by all the publishing business as one of the mainstays of literature in America.

I had no intention of standing in the place and listening as a spy. In fact, to tell the truth, I had become immediately interested in a new translation of the *Moral Discourses of Epictetus*. The book was very neatly printed, quite well bound and was offered at eighteen cents; so that for the moment I was strongly tempted to buy it, though it seemed best to take a dip into it first.

I had hardly read more than the first three chapters when my attention was diverted by a conversation going on in the front of the store.

"You're quite sure it's his *latest*?" a fashionably dressed lady was saying to Mr. Sellyer.

"Oh, yes, Mrs. Rasselyer," answered the manager. "I assure you this is his very latest. In fact, they only came in yesterday."

As he spoke, he indicated with his hand a huge pile of books, gaily jacketed in white and blue. I could make out the title in big gilt lettering—*GOLDEN DREAMS*.

"Oh, yes," repeated Mr. Sellyer. "This is Mr. Slush's latest book. It's having a wonderful sale."

"That's all right, then," said the lady. "You see, one sometimes gets taken in so: I came in here last week and took two that seemed very nice, and I never noticed till I got home that they were both old books, published, I think, six months ago."

"Oh, dear me, Mrs. Rasselyer," said the manager in an apologetic tone, "I'm extremely sorry. Pray let us send for them and exchange them for you."

"Oh, it does not matter," said the lady; "of course I didn't read them. I gave them to my maid. She probably wouldn't know the difference, anyway."

"I suppose not," said Mr. Sellyer, with a condescending smile. "But of course, madam," he went on, falling into the easy chat of the fashionable bookman, "such mistakes are bound to happen sometimes. We had a very painful case only yesterday. One of



our oldest customers came in in a great hurry to buy books to take on the steamer, and before we realized what he had done—selecting the books I suppose merely by the titles, as some gentlemen are apt to do—he had taken two of last year's books. We wired at once to the steamer, but I'm afraid it's too late."

"But now, this book," said the lady, idly turning over the leaves, "is it good? What is it about?"

"It's an extremely *powerful* thing," said Mr. Sellyer, "in fact, *masterly*. The critics are saying that it's perhaps *the* most powerful book of the season. It has a—" And here Mr. Sellyer paused, and somehow his manner reminded me of my own when I am explaining to a university class something that I don't know myself—"It has a—a—*power*, so to speak—a very exceptional power; in fact, one may say without exaggeration it is the most *powerful* book of the month. Indeed," he added, getting on to easier ground, "it's having a perfectly wonderful sale."

"You seem to have a great many of them," said the lady.

"Oh, we have to," answered the manager. "There's a regular rush on the book. Indeed, you know it's a book that is bound to make a sensation. In fact, in certain quarters, they are saying that it's a book that ought not to—" And here Mr. Sellyer's voice became so low and ingratiating that I couldn't hear the rest of the sentence.

"Oh, really!" said Mrs. Rasselyer. "Well, I think I'll take it then. One ought to see what these talked-of things are about, anyway."

She had already begun to button her gloves, and to readjust her feather boa with which she had been knocking the Easter cards off the counter. Then she suddenly remembered something.

"Oh, I was forgetting," she said. "Will you send something to the house for Mr. Rasselyer at the same time? He's going down to Virginia for the vacation. You know the kind of thing he likes, do you not?"

"Oh, perfectly, madam," said the manager. "Mr. Rasselyer generally reads works of—er—I think he buys mostly books on—er—"

"Oh, travel and that sort of thing," said the lady.

"Precisely. I think we have here," and he pointed to the counter on the left, "what Mr. Rasselyer wants."

He indicated a row of handsome books—“*Seven Weeks in the Sahara*, seven dollars; *Six Months in a Waggon*, six-fifty net; *Afternoons in an Oxcart*, two volumes, four-thirty, with twenty off.”

“I think he has read those,” said Mrs. Rasselyer. “At least there are a good many at home that seem like that.”

“Oh, very possibly—but here, now, *Among the Cannibals of Corfu*—yes, that I think he has had—*Among the*—that, too, I think—but this I am certain he would like, just in this morning—*Among the Monkeys of New Guinea*—ten dollars, net.”

And with this Mr. Sellyer laid his hand on a pile of new books, apparently as numerous as the huge pile of *Golden Dreams*.

“*Among the Monkeys*,” he repeated, almost caressingly.

“It seems rather expensive,” said the lady.

“Oh, very much so—a most expensive book,” the manager repeated in a tone of enthusiasm. “You see, Mrs. Rasselyer, it’s the illustrations, actual photographs”—he ran the leaves over in his fingers—“of actual monkeys, taken with the camera—and the paper, you notice—in fact, madam, the book costs, the mere manufacture of it, nine dollars and ninety cents—of course we make no profit on it. But it’s a book we like to handle.”

Everybody likes to be taken into the details of technical business; and of course everybody likes to know that a bookseller is losing money. These, I realized, were two axioms in the methods of Mr. Sellyer.

So very naturally Mrs. Rasselyer bought *Among the Monkeys*, and in another moment Mr. Sellyer was directing a clerk to write down an address on Fifth Avenue, and was bowing deeply as he showed the lady out of the door.

As he turned back to his counter his manner seemed much changed.

“That Monkey book,” I heard him murmur to his assistant, “is going to be a pretty stiff proposition.”

But he had no time for further speculation.

Another lady entered.

This time even to an eye less trained than Mr. Sellyer’s, the deep, expensive mourning and the pensive face proclaimed the sentimental widow.

“Something new in fiction,” repeated the manager, “yes, madam

—here's a charming thing—*Golden Dreams*”—he hung lovingly on the words—“a very sweet story, singularly sweet; in fact, madam, the critics are saying it is the sweetest thing that Mr. Slush has done.”

“Is it good?” said the lady. I began to realize that all customers asked this.

“A charming book,” said the manager. “It's a love story—very simple and sweet, yet wonderfully charming. Indeed, the reviews say it's the most charming book of the month. My wife was reading it aloud only last night. She could hardly read for tears.”

“I suppose it's quite a safe book, is it?” asked the widow. “I want it for my little daughter.”

“Oh, quite safe,” said Mr. Sellyer, with an almost parental tone, “in fact, written quite in the old style, like the dear old books of the past—quite like”—here Mr. Sellyer paused with a certain slight haze of doubt visible in his eye—“like Dickens and Fielding and Sterne and so on. We sell a great many to the clergy, madam.”

The lady bought *Golden Dreams*, received it wrapped up in green enamelled paper, and passed out.

“Have you any good light reading for vacation time?” called out the next customer in a loud, breezy voice—he had the air of a stock broker starting on a holiday.

“Yes,” said Mr. Sellyer, and his face almost broke into a laugh as he answered, “here's an excellent thing—*Golden Dreams*—quite the most humorous book of the season—simply screaming—my wife was reading it aloud only yesterday. She could hardly read for laughing.”

“What's the price, one dollar? One-fifty. All right, wrap it up.” There was a clink of money on the counter, and the customer was gone. I began to see exactly where professors and college people who want copies of *Epictetus* at 18 cents and sections of *World Reprints of Literature* at 12 cents a section come in, in the book trade.

“Yes, Judge!” said the manager to the next customer, a huge, dignified personage in a wide-awake hat, “sea stories? Certainly. Excellent reading, no doubt, when the brain is overcharged as yours must be. Here is the very latest—*Among the Monkeys of New Guinea*, ten dollars, reduced to four-fifty. The manufacture alone

costs six-eighty. We're selling it out. Thank you, Judge. Send it? Yes. Good morning."

After that the customers came and went in a string. I noticed that though the store was filled with books—ten thousand of them, at a guess—Mr. Sellyer was apparently only selling two. Every woman who entered went away with *Golden Dreams*: every man was given a copy of the *Monkeys of New Guinea*. To one lady *Golden Dreams* was sold as exactly the reading for a holiday, to another as the very book to read *after* a holiday; another bought it as a book for a rainy day, and a fourth as the right sort of reading for a fine day. The *Monkeys* was sold as a sea story, a land story, a story of the jungle, and a story of the mountains, and it was put at a price corresponding to Mr. Sellyer's estimate of the purchaser.

At last after a busy two hours, the store grew empty for a moment.

"Wilfred," said Mr. Sellyer, turning to his chief assistant, "I am going out to lunch. Keep those two books running as hard as you can. We'll try them for another day and then cut them right out. And I'll drop round to Dockem & Discount, the publishers, and make a kick about them, and see what they'll do."

I felt that I had lingered long enough. I drew near with the *Epictetus* in my hand.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Sellyer, professional again in a moment. "*Epictetus*? A charming thing. Eighteen cents. Thank you. Perhaps we have some other things there that might interest you. We have a few second-hand things in the alcove there that you might care to look at. There's an *Aristotle*, two volumes—a very fine thing—practically illegible, that you might like: and a *Cicero* came in yesterday—very choice—damaged by damp—and I think we have a *Machiavelli*, quite exceptional—practically torn to pieces, and the covers gone—a very rare old thing, sir, if you're an expert."

"No, thanks," I said. And then from a curiosity that had been growing in me and that I couldn't resist, "That book—*Golden Dreams*," I said, "you seem to think it a very wonderful work?"

Mr. Sellyer directed one of his shrewd glances at me. He knew I didn't want to buy the book, and perhaps, like lesser people, he had his off moments of confidence.

He shook his head.

"A bad business," he said. "The publishers have unloaded the thing on us, and we have to do what we can. They're stuck with it, I understand, and they look to us to help them. They're advertising it largely and may pull it off. Of course, there's just a chance. One can't tell. It's just possible we may get the church people down on it and if so we're all right. But short of that we'll never make it. I imagine it's perfectly rotten."

"Haven't you read it?" I asked.

"Dear me, no!" said the manager. His air was that of a milkman who is offered a glass of his own milk. "A pretty time I'd have if I tried to *read* the new books. It's quite enough to keep track of them without that."

"But those people," I went on, deeply perplexed, "who bought the book. Won't they be disappointed?"

Mr. Sellyer shook his head. "Oh, no," he said; "you see, they won't *read* it. They never do."

"But at any rate," I insisted, "your wife thought it a fine story."

Mr. Sellyer smiled widely.

"I am not married, sir," he said.



## ON THE NEED FOR A QUIET COLLEGE

IF somebody would give me about two dozen very old elm trees and about fifty acres of wooded ground and lawn—not too near anywhere and not too far from everywhere—I think I could set up a college that would put all the big universities of to-day in the shade. I am not saying that it would be better. But it would be different.

I would need a few buildings, but it doesn't take many—stone, if possible—and a belfry and a clock. The clock wouldn't need to go; it might be better if it didn't. I would want some books—a few thousand would do—and some apparatus. But it's amazing how little apparatus is needed for scientific work of the highest quality: in fact "the higher the fewer."

Most of all, I should need a set of professors. I would need only a dozen of them—but they'd have to be real ones—disinterested men of learning, who didn't even know they were disinterested. And, mind you, these professors of mine wouldn't sit in "offices" dictating letters on "cases" to stenographers, and only leaving their offices to go to "committees" and "conferences." There would be no "offices" in my college and no "committees," and my professors would have no time for conferences, because the job they would be on would need all eternity and would never be finished.

My professors would never be findable at any fixed place except when they were actually giving lectures. Men of thought have no business in an office. Learning runs away from "committee." There would be no "check up" on the time of the professors: there would be no "hire and fire" or "judge by results" or "standards" or "norms" of work for them: or any fixed number of hours.

But, on the other hand, they would, if I got the ones I want, be well worth their apparent irresponsibility: and when they lectured

each one would be, though he wouldn't know it, a magician—with such an interest and absorption that those who listened would catch the infection of it, and hurry from the lecture to the library, still warm with thought.

It must be understood that the work of professors is peculiar. Few professors, real ones, ever complete their work: what they give to the world is fragments. The rest remains. Their contributions must be added up, not measured singly. Every professor has his "life work" and sometimes does it, and sometimes dies first.

I can recall—I say it by way of digression—one such who was working on Machiavelli. When I first met him he had worked fourteen years. He worked in a large room covered a foot deep with Machiavelli—notes, pamphlets, remains. I asked him—it seemed a simple question—what he thought of Machiavelli. He shook his head. He said it was too soon to form an opinion. Later, ten years later, he published his book, *Machiavelli*. One of the great continental reviews—one of the really great ones (you and I never hear of them: they have a circulation of about 300) said his work was based on premature judgments. He was hurt, but he felt it was true. He had rushed into print too soon.

Another such devoted himself—he began years ago—to the history of the tariff. He began in a quiet lull of tariff changes when for three or four years public attention was elsewhere. He brought his work up to within a year or so of actual up-to-date completeness. Then the tariff began to move: two years later he was three years behind it. Presently, though he worked hard, he was five years behind it.

He has never caught it. His only hope now is that the tariff will move back towards free trade, and meet him.

Not that I mean to imply that my professors would be a pack of nuts or freaks. Not at all: their manners might be dreamy and their clothes untidy but they'd be—they'd have to be—the most eminent men in their subjects. To get them would be the main effort of the college: to coax them, buy them, if need be, to kidnap them. Nothing counts beside that. A college is made of men, not by the size of buildings, number of students and football records. But trustees don't know this, or, at best, catch only a glimmer of it and lose it.

Within a generation all the greatest books on the humanities would come from my college.

The professors bring the students. The students bring, unsought, the benefactions. The thing feeds itself like a flame in straw. But it's the men that count. A college doesn't need students: it's the students who need the college.

After twenty years my college would stand all alone. There are little colleges now but they ape bigness. There are quiet colleges but they try to be noisy. There are colleges without big games but they boom little ones. Mine would seem the only one, because the chance is there, wide open, and no one takes it. After twenty years people would drive in motor cars to see my college: and wouldn't be let in.

Round such a college there must be no thought of money. Money ruins life: I mean, to have to think of it, to take account of it, to know that it is there. Men apart from money, men in an army, men on an expedition of exploration, emerge to a new life. Money is gone. At times and places whole classes thus lift up, or partly: as in older countries like England the class called "gentry" that once was. These people lived on land and money from the past—stolen, perhaps, five hundred years ago—and so thought no more of it. They couldn't earn more; they didn't know how. They kept what they had, or dropped out, fell through a trestle bridge of social structure and were gone in the stream. This class, in America, we never had. They grow rare everywhere. Perhaps we don't want them. But they had the good luck that, in their lives, money in the sense here meant, didn't enter. Certain money limits circumscribed their life, but from day to day they never thought of it. A cow in a pasture, a fairly generous pasture, doesn't know it's in. It thinks it's outside. So did they.

So I would have it in my college. Students not rich and not poor—or not using their wealth and not feeling their poverty—an equality as unconscious as that where Evangeline lived.

Nor would their studies lead to, or aim at, or connect with wealth. The so-called practical studies are all astray. Real study, real learning must, for the individual, be quite valueless or it loses its value. The proper studies for my college are history and literature and

philosophy and thought and poetry and speculation, in the pursuit of which each shall repeat the eager search, the unending quest, of the past. Looking for one thing he shall find another. Looking for ultimate truth, which is unfindable, they will learn at least to repudiate all that is false.

I leave out at one sweep great masses of stuff usually taught: all that goes under such a name as a university faculty of Commerce. There is no such thing. The faculty of Commerce is down at the docks, at Wall Street, in the steel mills. A "degree" in Commerce is a salary of ten thousand a year. Those who fail to pass go to Atlanta—and stay there. Certain things in Commerce are teachable: accountancy, corporate organization and the principles of embezzlement. But that's not a university.

Out goes economics, except as speculation: not a thing to teach in instalments and propositions like geometry. You *can't* teach it. No one knows it. It's the riddle of the Sphinx. My graduates will be just nicely fitted to think about it when they come out. A first-year girl studying economics is as wide of the mark as an old man studying cosmetics. The philosophical speculative analysis of our economic life is the highest study of all, next to the riddle of our existence. But to cut it into classes and credits is a parody. Out it goes.

Out—but to come back again—goes medicine. Medicine is a great reality: it belongs in a *school*, not a college. My college fits people to study medicine, study it in crowded cities among gas-lights and ambulances and hospitals and human suffering, and keep their souls alive while they do it. Then later, as trained men in the noblest profession in the world, the atmosphere of the college, which they imbibed among my elm trees, grows about them again. The last word in cultivation is, and always has been, the cultivated "medicine man."

The engineers?—that's different. Theirs is the most "manly" of all the professions—among water power and gold mines and throwing bridges half a mile at a throw. But it's a *school* that trains them, not a college. They go to my college but they don't like it. They say it's too damn dreamy. So they kick out of it into engineering. For a time they remember the Latin third declension. Presently they forget it.



Doctors grow cultivated as they grow older. Engineers get rougher and rougher.

What I mean is that our studies have drifted away, away from the single-minded absorption of learning. Our students of to-day live in a whirl and clatter of "student activities." They have, in any large college, at least a hundred organizations and societies. They are "all up!" for this to-day and "all out!" for that to-morrow. Life is a continuous rally! a rah, rah! a parade! They play no games: they use teams for that. But exercise, and air, is their life. They *root*, in an organized hysteria, a code of signals telling them what to feel. They root, they rush, they organize, they play politics, run newspapers—and when they step from college into life, they fit it absolutely, having lived already.

No one is denying here what fine men and women college makes, physically fine and mentally alert. Any one of them could run an elevator the day he steps out of college.

But there's something wanting: do they *think*? Or is there anything after all to think about? And yet, surely, in the long run the world has lived on its speculative minds. Or hasn't it?

Some who think of course there must be. You can't submerge humanity in two generations. But mostly, I believe, the little poets fade out on their first-year benches, and the wistful intelligence learns to say "*Rah! Rah!*" and is lost.

Not so in my college. There will be no newspaper, except a last week's paper from the back counties of New England. There will be no politics because there will be no offices to run for. My students will control nothing. The whole movement of student control is a mistake. They're so busy controlling that they're not students.

They shall play games all they want to, but as games, not as a profession, not as college advertising—and no gate receipts. Till only a few years ago the country that taught the world its games, played them as apart from money—as far apart as sheer necessity allowed. If Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton (it wasn't, really: it was won in Belgium), there was at least no stadium at two dollars a seat.

One asks, perhaps, about the endowments, about the benefactors of my ideal college. The benefactors are all dead: or at least they



must act as if they were. Years ago on the prairies many authorities claimed that the only good Indian was a dead Indian. It may not have been true. But it is certainly true that the best college benefactor is a dead one. After all, the reward in the long run is his, those sculptured letters graven in the stone, "To the greater glory of God and in memory of Johannes Smith." That, in a college among elm trees—that's worth a lifetime of gifts, given and given gladly. Such things should best be graven in Latin. In my college they will be; Latin and lots of it, all over the place, with the mystic conspiracy of pretence, the wholesome humbug, that those who see it know what it means. Latin lasts. English seems to alter every thousand years or so. It's like the tariff that I named above—too mobile for academic use.

As with the benefactors, so with the managing trustees who look after the money and never lose it. Not dead, these, but very silent: solid men who don't need to talk and don't, but who can invest a million dollars over three depressions, and there it still is, like gold in a pot in the Pyramids. You find them chiefly in New England, at least I seem to have seen them there, more than anywhere else. They are at the head of huge investment businesses, so big that you never hear of them. Mostly, if they don't talk, it means that they are thinking where to place fifty million dollars. You see, they hate to break it.

And women? The arrangements in my college for the women students, and the women's dormitories? Oh, no—no, thank you. There aren't any women. Coeducation is a wonderful thing for women: college girls under coeducation leave college more fit to leave college than any others. College girls are better companions, better wives (as your own or as some one else's) than any others. It's the women who have made our college life the bright, happy thing it is—too bright, too happy.

But men can't *study* when women are around. And it's not only the students. If I let the women in, they'd get round some of my dusty old professors, and marry them—and good-bye to Machiavelli, and the higher thought.

## WHAT I READ THEN— WHAT YOU READ NOW

I AM sixty-eight years old. Sixty years ago, able to “read for myself,” I first passed through that magic gateway into the Garden of Imagination. How greatly has it changed in sixty years to become the very different garden, the very different world that you young people know to-day.

The world in which I lived, as compared with yours, was vast and empty and voiceless. Look at the map of it as it hung on the walls of our schoolroom. There was Africa, a huge continent with nothing but an outside rim to it, rivers that seemed to come from nowhere, and queer names along the coast now mostly vanished—Mozambique, Zanzibar, Sofalá; Asia, a lot of it just about as empty, with a great desert smeared across the middle, with its northern coast, inaccessible and unknown, washing into the Arctic Sea. Over the heart of the continent were still inscribed such queer and romantic names as Turkestan and Bokhara and the Kurghis Steppes. Arabia was marked also as a great empty desert, closed and forbidden. Of our own continent, great stretches were still one vast emptiness of prairie and forest, the Rocky Mountains infinitely far away, as yet pierced only with the thin thread of two or three railway lines. Canada was huge and impenetrable. South America seemed on the map, as far as its insides went, an unexplored jungle.

In such a world, the sense of distance, of mystery and of the unknown was far more impressive than it is to-day. Your little world is shrunken, crowded—noisy and quarrelsome; it is like a street alley where there was once a silent wood.

I went the other day to the “pictures” and there before me on the screen was the young King Farouk of Egypt in a tarboosh and his Queen Farida in a Paris dress, just bowing themselves off in time to give the Japanese a chance to bomb Shanghai—also in a hurry,

because Dartmouth was going to play hockey against McGill in a minute. The game was timed to allow Mussolini to come out on the roof of something or other (it went fast, I'm not sure what roof it was) and give a talk meant for Hitler, who appeared on the terrace of the Tiergarten—followed by the last minute of a fight in Madison Square Garden. . . . What a world! Rushing with voices that come from currents of cosmic force running through our very bodies themselves—quivering with power we cannot control, dangers we can see but not avoid.

I am not placing my world *above* yours—I am only exchanging one mystery for another. Our life, in any case, is framed in mystery, floating in the unknown; but the world of to-day seems to me, as an old man, in a way terrifying, like a thing rushing to its doom! But don't worry over that, my young friends! Old men have *always* thought the world was hurrying to its doom; and the joke is, it wasn't the *world* at all, but just the old men themselves.

But at least the contrast is great. Oh, to be back in the silent world of sixty years ago, in which a little boy with a book under an apple tree could be transported to the Rocky Mountains and there sit with Trapper Ben and Siwash Joe, beside a crackling fire of resinous pine, over a dish of buffalo meat. *You* can't sit there, you see, because if you did, Trapper Ben would say to Siwash Joe, "Turn on the radio, Joe, and let's hear what's doin'!" and Siwash Joe would say, "Me thinkum King Farouk of Egypt, he marry one nicey piece Squaw."

From such a setting you will easily understand that our reading of sixty years ago was based on the "bigness" and mystery of the world, of adventure in "distant lands" and "overseas," of people disappearing on long voyages to return as heroes or millionaires—back from the "diggings" or the "Cannibal Isles," or places like that. Notice the queer, fascinating names of our world. *You'd* call the "diggings" the "Consolidated Mining & Smelting Company," and the "Cannibal Isles" the "Municipality of Honolulu."

But of course we were strongest of all on "desert islands." The height of everybody's imagination was to share the fate of that lucky man Robinson Crusoe and be shipwrecked on a desert island, with one or two "other fellers"—no girls and no grown-ups. Desert islands always contained in abundance everything needed for life, liberty

and the pursuit of happiness, such as breadfruit, yams, mangoes, cocoanuts—the stuff we never got at home except at Christmas. Of course the world's best desert island story was *Robinson Crusoe*, and no doubt you still read it. But it's really upside down. Defoe, who wrote it in 1719, meant it as a picture of loneliness and hardship, but the story, as stories do, turned into something else. Hence all boys envy Robinson his island and his goats and his parrot, and above all his man Friday. What they like is the fun of *being* there. When the Spaniards come into the story and the "adventures," the interest begins to fade.

The second best known desert story, written a hundred years ago, was *Swiss Family Robinson*. Its author was a Swiss professor of philosophy so that shows how much *he* knew about desert islands. His story was no good after you were ten years old—too namby-pamby, the Island too easy. And then how silly to have Mr. and Mrs. Robinson there! If you're lucky enough to hit on a desert island you don't want your father and mother around.

But the best island story of the lot was Jules Verne's *Mysterious Island*. Verne was a Frenchman but the boys of England and America adopted him so completely that his books, as they appeared from about 1870 to 1900, were put into English as soon as written. Everybody has heard of his "prophecy" stories, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* and the *Clipper of the Clouds*, both come true, and his *Journey to the Moon*, still waiting. But best of all was the wonderful island on which there lands a group of castaways carried in a great storm in a balloon—days and days in dark and wind and clouds, and blown to land—heaven knows where, over such great spaces as we knew and you can't *ever* know. They are landed empty-handed. They begin as children of civilization, from nothing, make and contrive everything, melting iron for tools and mixing gunpowder—but *read* it! *It's still good*.

Of course our adventures turned mainly on the sea. Say what you like, the sea can never be the same again since steam and wireless and radio.

Where are now

. . . *The Spanish sailors with bearded lips,  
And the mystery and beauty of the ships  
And the magic of the sea.*



Never again can be reproduced the wonder and beauty of the great sailing ships outward bound in the sunset a hundred years ago. Kipling has tried, in his *MacAndrew's Hymn*, to lift the huge floating machine called a steamship to a par with them in mystery and wonder. But it can't be done. The things are different. The one is man, the other is a machine.

Never again can literature have such a romantic basis as in those great days of the sea. You can read it now but it's all altered by your knowledge of radio and wireless. To you, all great sea stories suggest the idea, "What a pity they didn't have wireless!" But as for *us*, we just plunged from shipwreck to shipwreck, buffeted, tossed about, battered by a rush of nautical terms that we didn't understand! We saw the *Grosvenor* strike on the breakers and founder off the coast of South Africa—infinite desolation!—foundering with all hands—well, perhaps a few did reach shore to wander among the savages. We saw the Indiaman *Kent* burned to the water's edge, and the *Dunbar* beaten to pieces off Sydney Heads in the dark, and Masterman Ready in the wreck of the *Pacific*. Such writers as Captain Marryat, Fenimore Cooper and Clark Russell went literally around the world.

You can't read them now, my young friends, I am sure. But don't call them *slow*; the reason is not in them but in you. You are not—I say it very politely—fit to read them. You see, you are a child of machinery and electricity and so you want machinery at every turn. In my day, for example, in a sea story we used to "sweep the pirates off the deck with our cutlasses"; just a loud "Hurrah!" and over they went, still gnashing their teeth and biting their nails. But you would want to defeat them with "heat ray" or a "detonating bomb" or some such deviltry as that. Poor creatures! We just swept them off the deck—surely that doesn't hurt anybody.

But above all we loved the technical language of the sea—the hundred ropes, every one with a name, and all the parts of the ship that we knew so well by name but only vaguely by location. The "bits," the "main chains," the "scuppers"—were they parts of the "binnacle" or of the "taffrail"? The "tops," the "cross trees," the "main-royal-yard"—how high up are we? Don't look down!

When your teachers teach you Shakespeare they explain to you what a wonderful knowledge of the sea Shakespeare had, just be-



cause of a little biff of sea language, or an attempt at it, in a play called *The Tempest*.

MASTER: Good, *speak to the mariners: fall to't yarely, or we run ourselves aground: bestir, bestir!*

BOATSWAIN: *Heigh, my hearts! Cheerly, cheerly, my hearts! yare, yare! Take in the topsail. Tend to the master's whistle. Down with the topsail. Yare!*

Tut! That's poor stuff, as Mark Twain once showed (I am quoting his example)—just elementary. Compare it with the language of a *real* sailor like R. H. Dana, who wrote for us *Two Years Before the Mast*.

*Having hove short, cast off the gaskets, and made the bunt of each sail fast by the jigger, with a man on each yard, at a word the whole canvas on the ship was loosed, and with the greatest rapidity possible everything was sheeted home and hoisted up, the anchor tripped and cat-headed, and the ship under headway.*

But of course for you to-day there is no more "cat-heading" and "sheeting." Here is the kind of passage that you would expect in one of your books.

Ned brought the radio message to the Captain. "A radio message, sir," he said, "in code."

"Decode it," cried Captain Carburetor. Ned, who was a skilled decoder, decoded the coded radio.

"What does it say, Ned?" asked the Captain.

"It's from an airplane, sir," said Ned, "warning us that they can see an enemy submarine approaching us at a narrow angle."

"How narrow?" asked Captain Carburetor.

"One degree, two minutes, log  $5\frac{1}{2}$ ," answered Ned.

"How long have we got?" asked the Captain.

"Forty-six seconds, sir," said Ned.

"Plenty!" said the Captain. "Pass me a depth bomb. Or here, boy," he added, putting his hand, not unkindly, on the youngster's shoulder, "you jump over with it yourself."

But don't think for a moment that our adventure books were all and only of the sea. Not at all! We were just as much at home on land—in the heart of the forest or out on the prairie, with just

enough savages "lurking" round to make things creepy. What they did was always called "lurking." They never came straight at you, in an open manly way; they "lurked." The only notice you got of their approach was the snapping of a dry twig; if you heard that, watch out! There was "a pesky redskin" somewhere around. Not that you yourself could hear it, but it was heard by the quick, trained ear of your guide and companion, Old Pigskin or Deerskin or whatever he was. I am thinking here, as you guess, perhaps, of Fenimore Cooper, whose books went all over the world in all the languages. Sixty years ago our continent was still young enough and open enough to keep Cooper's books near and intelligible; the prairie was still there and Sitting Bull's massacre of Custer's force recent enough to thrill us with its horror. It is strange to think of the marvellous vogue and influence of writers like Cooper, Scott and Dickens, writing for all the world. What *they* did can never be done again. The times forbid it. A writer nowadays may make a huge hit with a "best seller," *Gone with the Tide*, or *Off with the Wind*—half a million copies in a year, and in five years as dead and forgotten as dry grass.

Compare that with the world significance of *The Last of the Mohicans*. For the sake of *that* book, little boys in France and Germany dressed themselves up in what they meant for "leggings," with feathers and scalp-locks, and crawled around in the bushes of suburban gardens, avoiding the snapping of a dry twig. Remember the name if you don't know it already—*The Last of the Mohicans*. And don't pronounce it, as they *always* did in England, as if *Mohican* rhymed with "Joey can"; it's *Moheegan*—with a sort of Irish sound to it.

Later on, of course, we moved from pure adventure to adventure-romance—Walter Scott for all time the master of it. I am afraid that many young people, perhaps most, can't read Walter Scott to-day. They find him "too long-winded." That seems a queer accusation from a generation that makes its novels longer and longer, and thinks nothing of 600 pages. I admit that our books were "long-winded," but so are the books of to-day. Only they are long-winded in a different way. We took our "long wind" in the beginning, in the way of an introduction; nowadays you get the "long wind" all through; the book just goes on and on, like sawing wood. There's no *need* for it to stop; the end could be the beginning, just as in the moving pictures when we come in late and take a story backwards.

We see the final death scene and then learn who it is that died and what killed him. In fact the "pictures" have shown us that a story is a circle. You begin anywhere.

But in *our* good old books you began at the beginning. Very much so. In fact, away before the beginning. If the story was laid in the Highlands you had to have first the history and description of the Highlands and how they got high. Then as the hero of the story was going to be Hoosh McQuoosh, you had to learn quietly and slowly all about the ancestry of the Hoosh McQuoosh family, one of whom fell at Bannockburn, one at Flodden—in fact they fell all over the place. But the reward was that by the time you got, slowly and gradually, into the story, you were right at home in it; it felt like part of you.

In one department I am willing to confess our books of sixty years ago were weak. That was in the matter of the heroines. I am afraid, as I look back at them, that our heroines were "sims." True, they were given large "lustrous eyes" like a startled fawn, mouths like "rosebuds" and a complexion that shot over with blushes as rapidly as a neon sign. But they were "sims." There was no sport in them. They wouldn't go out at night. If you dared to touch them, they cried out, "Unhand me, foul villain!" In fact their rhetoric—talk like *that*, only longer—was their strong point, their chief defence. Alone with a foul villain in a ruined castle they could blast him with it. Even in the forest they could knock out an Indian at ten yards. "Despicable Man," cried Ethelinda, as the fierce Mohawk raised his tomahawk, "alone and defenceless, beyond human help, a prey at once to treachery and menace, with nothing on which to rely save only the promptings of my own innocence, I command you to restrain your hand!" The Mohawk lowered his tomahawk with a groan; a blush as of shame (it really wasn't) mantled his dusky countenance, and with a couple more groans, he vanished into the brush!

When I compare those heroines with the kind of girls I see in the moving pictures to-day, skipping around on beaches and eating midnight suppers under rubber trees, I feel sorry to think what we missed!

But you must excuse my writing further—there's a film I must go to see—racketeers, gangsters, murders, trials, jails, all our bright new world spinning at its best.



# LECTURES





## THE GIVE AND TAKE OF TRAVEL

I HAVE recently noted among my possessions a narrow black comb and a flat brown hair brush. I imagine they must belong to the Pullman Car Company. As I have three of the Company's brushes and combs already, I shall be glad to hand these back at any time when the company cares to send for them.

I have also a copy of the New Testament in plain good print which is marked "put here by the Gibbons" and which I believe I got from either the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Montreal or the Biltmore in New York. I do not know any of the Gibbons. But the hotel may have the book at any time, as I have finished with it. I will bring it to them.

On the other hand, I shall be very greatly obliged if the man who has my winter overshoes (left on the Twentieth Century Limited) will let me have them back again. As the winter is soon coming I shall need them. If he will leave them at any agreed spot three miles from a town I will undertake not to prosecute him.

I mention these matters not so much for their own sake as because they form part of the system of give and take which plays a considerable part in my existence.

Like many people who have to travel a great deal I get absent-minded about it. I move to and fro among trains and hotels shepherded by red-caps and escorted by bell boys. I have been in so many hotels that they all look alike. If there is any difference in the faces of the hotel clerks I can't see it. If there is any way of distinguishing one waiter from another I don't know it. There is the same underground barber surrounded by white marble and carrying on the same conversation all the way from Halifax to Los Angeles. In short I have been in so many towns that I never know where I am.

Under these circumstances a man of careless disposition and absent mind easily annexes and easily loses small items of property. In

a Pullman car there is no difficulty whatever, if one has the disposition for it, in saying to a man sitting beside you, "Good morning, sir. It looks like a beautiful day," and then reaching over and packing his hair brush into your valise. If he is the right kind of man he will never notice it, or at best he will say in return, "A beautiful morning," and then take away your necktie.

There is, let it be noticed, all the difference in the world between this process and petty larceny.

The thing I mean couldn't possibly be done by a thief. He wouldn't have the nerve, the quiet assurance, the manner. It is the absolute innocence of the thing that does it.

For example, if a man offers me a cigarette I find that I take his cigarette case and put it in my pocket. When I rise from my hotel dinner I carry away the napkin. When I leave my hotel room I always take away the key.

There is no real sense in this: I have more hotel keys than I can use as it is. But the fault is partly with our hotels. So many of them put up a little notice beside the door that reads, "Have You Forgotten Anything?" Whenever I see this I stand in thought a minute then it occurs to me, "Why, of course, the Key!" and I take it with me.

I am aware that there is a class of persons—women mostly—who carry away spoons and other things deliberately as souvenirs. But I disclaim all connection with that kind of thing. That is not what I meant at all.

I would never take a valuable spoon, unless I happened to be using it at the table to open the back of my watch, or something of the sort. But when I sign my name on the hotel book I keep the pen. Similarly and in all fairness, I give up my own fountain pen to the telegraph clerk. The theory works both ways.

As a rule, there is nothing more in all this than a harmless give and take, a sort of profit and loss account to which any traveller easily becomes accustomed. But at the same time one should be careful. The theory may go a little too far. I remember not long ago coming home from a theatre in Trenton, New Jersey, with a lady's white silk scarf about my neck.

I had no notion how it had got there. Whether the woman had carelessly wrapped it about my neck in mistake for her own, or

whether I had unwound it off her, I cannot say. But I regret the incident and will gladly put the scarf back on her neck at any time. I will also take this occasion to express my regret for the pair of boots which I put on in a Pullman car in Syracuse in the dark of a winter morning.

There is a special arrangement on the New York Central whereby at Syracuse passengers making connections for the South are allowed to get up at four and dress while the others are still asleep. There are signs put up adjuring everybody to keep as quiet as possible. Naturally, these passengers get the best of everything and, within limits, it is fair enough as they have to get up so early. But the boots of which I speak outclass anything I ever bought for myself and I am sorry about them.

Our American railways have very wisely taken firm grounds on this problem of property mislaid or exchanged or lost on the Pullman cars. As everybody knows when one of our trains reaches a depot the passengers leave it with as mad a haste as if it were full of smallpox. In fact, they are all lined up at the door like cattle in a pen ready to break loose before the train stops. What happens to the car itself afterwards they don't care. It is known only to those who have left a hair brush in the car and tried to find it.

But in reality, the car is instantly rushed off to a siding, its number-placard taken out of the window so that it cannot be distinguished, after which a vacuum cleaner is turned on and sucks up any loose property that is left in it. Meantime the porter has avoided all detection by an instantaneous change of costume in which he appears disguised as a member of the Pittsburgh Yacht Club.

I do not mean to imply for a moment that our railways are acting in a dishonest way in the matter. On the contrary, they have no intention of keeping or annexing their passengers' property. But very naturally they do not want a lot of random people rummaging through their cars. They endeavour, however, through their central offices to make as fair a division of the lost-and-found property as they can. Any one applying in the proper way can have some of it. I have always found in this respect the greatest readiness to give me a fair share of everything.

A few months ago for example I had occasion to send to the Canadian National Railway a telegram which read, "Have left grey

fedora hat with black band on your Toronto-Chicago train." Within an hour I got back a message, "Your grey fedora hat being sent you from Windsor, Ontario." And a little later on the same day I received another message which read, "Sending grey hat from Chicago," and an hour after that, "Grey hat found at Sheboygan, Michigan."

Indeed, I think I am not exaggerating when I say that any of our great Canadian and American Railways will send you anything of that sort if you telegraph for it. In my own case the theory has become a regular practice. I telegraph to the New York Central, "Please forward me spring overcoat in a light grey or fawn," and they send it immediately; or I call up the Canadian Pacific on the telephone and ask them if they can let me have a pair of tan boots and if possible a suit of golf clothes.

I have found that our leading hotels are even more punctilious in respect to their things than the railways. It is now hardly safe to attempt to leave in their rooms anything that one doesn't want. Last month, having cut my razor strop so badly that it was of no further use, I was foolish enough to leave it hanging in a room in the Biltmore Hotel in New York. On my return home I got a letter which read: "Dear Sir: We beg to inform you that you have left your razor strop in room 2216. We have had your strop packed in excelsior packing and await your instructions in regard to it."

I telegraphed back, "Please keep razor strop. You may have it." After which in due course I got a further letter which said, "We are pleased to inform you that the razor strop which you so generously gave to this Company has been laid before our board of directors who have directed us to express their delight and appreciation at your generous gift. Any time you want a room and bath let us know."



## "WE HAVE WITH US TO-NIGHT"

NOT only during my tour in England but for many years past it has been my lot to speak and to lecture in all sorts of places, under all sorts of circumstances and before all sorts of audiences. I say this, not in boastfulness, but in sorrow. Indeed, I only mention it to establish the fact that when I talk of lecturers and speakers, I talk of what I know.

Few people realize how arduous and how disagreeable public lecturing is. The public sees the lecturer step out on to the platform in his little white waistcoat and his long tailed coat and with a false air of a conjurer about him, and they think him happy. After about ten minutes of his talk they are tired of him. Most people tire of a lecture in ten minutes; clever people can do it in five. Sensible people never go to lectures at all. But the people who do go to a lecture and who get tired of it, presently hold it as a sort of a grudge against the lecturer personally. In reality his sufferings are worse than theirs.

For my own part I always try to appear as happy as possible while I am lecturing. I take this to be part of the trade of anybody labelled a humourist and paid as such. I have no sympathy whatever with the idea that a humourist ought to be a lugubrious person with a face stamped with melancholy. This is a cheap and elementary effect belonging to the level of a circus clown. The image of "laughter shaking both his sides" is the truer picture of comedy. Therefore, I say, I always try to appear cheerful at my lectures and even to laugh at my own jokes. Oddly enough this arouses a kind of resentment in some of the audience. "Well, I will say," said a stern-looking woman who spoke to me after one of my lectures, "you certainly do seem to enjoy your own fun." "Madam," I answered, "if I didn't, who would?" But in reality the whole business of being a public lecturer is one long variation of boredom and fatigue. So I propose to set down here some of the many trials which the lecturer has to bear.

The first of the troubles which any one who begins giving public lectures meets at the very outset is the fact that the audience won't come to hear him. This happens invariably and constantly, and not through any fault or shortcoming of the speaker.

I don't say that this happened very often to me in my tour in England. In nearly all cases I had crowded audiences: by dividing up the money that I received by the average number of people present to hear me I have calculated that they paid thirteen cents each. And my lectures are evidently worth thirteen cents. But at home in Canada I have very often tried the fatal experiment of lecturing for nothing: and in that case the audience simply won't come. A man will turn out at night when he knows he is going to hear a first class thirteen cent lecture; but when the thing is given for nothing, why go to it?

The city in which I live is overrun with little societies, clubs and associations, always wanting to be addressed. So at least it is in appearance. In reality the societies are composed of presidents, secretaries and officials, who want the conspicuousness of office, and a large list of other members who won't come to the meetings. For such an association, the invited speaker who is to lecture for nothing prepares his lecture on "Indo-Germanic Factors in the Current of History." If he is a professor, he takes all the winter at it. You may drop in at his house at any time and his wife will tell you that he is "upstairs working on his lecture." If he comes down at all it is in carpet slippers and dressing gown. His mental vision of his meeting is that of a huge gathering of keen people with Indo-Germanic faces, hanging upon every word.

Then comes the fated night. There are seventeen people present. The lecturer refuses to count them. He refers to them afterwards as "about a hundred." To this group he reads his paper on the Indo-Germanic Factor. It takes him two hours. When he is over the chairman invites discussion. There is *no* discussion. The audience is willing to let the Indo-Germanic factors go unchallenged. Then the chairman makes his speech. He says:

"I am very sorry indeed that we should have had such a very poor 'turn out' to-night. I am sure that the members who were not here have missed a real treat in the delightful paper that we have listened to. I want to assure the lecturer that if he comes to the Owl's Club

again we can guarantee him next time a capacity audience. And will any members, please, who haven't paid their dollar this winter, pay it either to me or to Mr. Sibley as they pass out."

I have heard this speech (in the years when I have had to listen to it) so many times that I know it by heart. I have made the acquaintance of the Owl's Club under so many names that I recognize it at once. I am aware that its members refuse to turn out in cold weather; that they do not turn out in wet weather; that when the weather is really fine, it is impossible to get them together; that the slightest counter-attraction—a hockey match, a sacred concert—goes to their heads at once.

There was a time when I was the newly appointed occupant of a college chair and had to address the Owl's Club. It is a penalty that all new professors pay; and the Owls batten upon them like bats. It is one of the compensations of age that I am free of the Owl's Club forever. But in the days when I still had to address them, I used to take it out of the Owls in a speech, delivered, in imagination only and not out loud, to the assembled meeting of the seventeen Owls, after the chairman had made his concluding remarks. It ran as follows:

"Gentlemen—if you are such, which I doubt. I realize that the paper which I have read on 'Was Hegel a deist?' has been an error. I spent all the winter on it and now I realize that not one of you pups know who Hegel was or what a deist is. Never mind. It is over now, and I am glad. But just let me say this, only this, which won't keep you a minute. Your chairman has been good enough to say that if I come again you will get together a capacity audience to hear me. Let me tell you that if your society waits for its next meeting till I come to address you again, you will wait indeed. In fact, gentlemen—I say it very frankly—it will be in another world."

But I pass over the audience. Suppose there is a real audience, and suppose them all duly gathered together. Then it becomes the business of that gloomy gentleman—facetiously referred to in the newspaper reports as the "genial chairman"—to put the lecturer to the bad. In nine cases out of ten he can do so. Some chairmen, indeed, develop a great gift for it. Here are one or two examples from my own experience:

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the chairman of a society in a little

country town in Western Ontario, to which I had come as a paid (a very humbly paid) lecturer, "we have with us to-night a gentleman" (here he made an attempt to read my name on a card, failed to read it and put the card back in his pocket)—"a gentleman who is to lecture to us on" (here he looked at his card again)—"on Ancient—Ancient—I don't very well see what it is—Ancient—Britain? Thank you, on Ancient Britain. Now, this is the first of our series of lectures for this winter. The last series, as you all know, was not a success. In fact, we came out at the end of the year with a deficit. So this year we are starting a new line and trying the experiment of cheaper talent."

Here the chairman gracefully waved his hand toward me and there was a certain amount of applause. "Before I sit down," the chairman added, "I'd like to say that I am sorry to see such a poor turn-out to-night and to ask any of the members who haven't paid their dollar to pay it either to me or to Mr. Sibley as they pass out."

Let anybody who knows the discomfiture of coming out before an audience on any terms, judge how it feels to crawl out in front of them labelled *cheaper talent*.

Another charming way in which the chairman endeavours to put both the speaker for the evening and the audience into an entirely good humour, is by reading out letters of regret from persons unable to be present. This, of course, is only for grand occasions when the speaker has been invited to come under very special auspices. It was my fate, not long ago, to "appear" (this is the correct word to use in this connection) in this capacity when I was going about Canada trying to raise some money for the relief of the Belgians. I travelled in great glory with a pass on the Canadian Pacific Railway (not since extended: officials of the road kindly note this) and was most generously entertained wherever I went.

It was, therefore, the business of the chairman at such meetings as these to try and put a special distinction or cachet on the gathering. This is how it was done:

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the chairman, rising from his seat on the platform with a little bundle of papers in his hand, "before I introduce the speaker of the evening, I have one or two items that I want to read to you." Here he rustles his papers and there is a deep hush in the hall while he selects one. "We had hoped to have with



us to-night Sir Robert Borden, the Prime Minister of this Dominion. I have just received a telegram from Sir Robert in which he says that he will not be able to be here" (*great applause*). The chairman puts up his hand for silence, picks up another telegram and continues, "Our committee, ladies and gentlemen, telegraphed an invitation to Sir Wilfrid Laurier very cordially inviting him to be here to-night. I have here Sir Wilfrid's answer in which he says that he will not be able to be with us" (*renewed applause*). The chairman again puts up his hand for silence and goes on, picking up one paper after another. "The Minister of Finance regrets that he will be unable to come" (*applause*). "Mr. Rodolphe Lemieux (*applause*) will not be here (*great applause*)—The Mayor of Toronto (*applause*) is detained on business (*wild applause*)—the Anglican Bishop of the Diocese (*applause*)—the Principal of the University College, Toronto (*great applause*)—the Minister of Education (*applause*)—none of these are coming." There is a great clapping of hands and enthusiasm, after which the meeting is called to order with a very distinct and palpable feeling that it is one of the most distinguished audiences ever gathered in the hall.

Here is another experience of the same period while I was pursuing the same exalted purpose: I arrived in a little town in Eastern Ontario, and found to my horror that I was billed to "appear" *in a church*. I was supposed to give readings from my works, and my books are supposed to be of a humourous character. A church hardly seemed the right place to get funny in. I explained my difficulty to the pastor of the church, a very solemn looking man. He nodded his head, slowly and gravely, as he grasped my difficulty. "I see," he said, "I see, but I think that I can introduce you to our people in such a way as to make that right."

When the time came, he led me up on to the pulpit platform of the church, just beside and below the pulpit itself, with a reading desk and a big bible and a shaded light beside it. It was a big church, and the audience, sitting in half darkness, as is customary during a sermon, reached away back into the gloom. The place was packed full and absolutely quiet. Then the chairman spoke:

"Dear friends," he said, "I want you to understand that it will be all right to laugh to-night. Let me hear you laugh heartily, laugh right out, just as much as ever you want to, because" (and here his



voice assumed the deep sepulchral tones of the preachers)—“when we think of the noble object for which the professor appears to-night, we may be assured that the Lord will forgive any one who will laugh at the professor.”

I am sorry to say, however, that none of the audience, even with the plenary absolution in advance, were inclined to take a chance on it.

I recall in this same connection the chairman of a meeting at a certain town in Vermont. He represents the type of chairman who turns up so late at the meeting that the committee have no time to explain to him properly what the meeting is about or who the speaker is. I noticed on this occasion that he introduced me very guardedly by name (from a little card) and said nothing about the Belgians, and nothing about my being (supposed to be) a humourist. This last was a great error. The audience, for want of guidance, remained very silent and decorous, and well behaved during my talk. Then, somehow, at the end, while some one was moving a vote of thanks, the chairman discovered his error. So he tried to make it good. Just as the audience were getting up to put on their wraps, he rose, knocked on his desk and said:

“Just a minute, please, ladies and gentlemen, just a minute. I have just found out—I should have known it sooner, but I was late in coming to this meeting—that the speaker who has just addressed you has done so in behalf of the Belgian Relief Fund. I understand that he is a well-known Canadian humourist (ha! ha!) and I am sure that we have all been immensely amused (ha! ha!). He is giving his delightful talks (ha! ha!)—though I didn’t know this till just this minute—for the Belgian Relief Fund, and he is giving his services for nothing. I am sure when we realize this, we shall all feel that it has been well worth while to come. I am only sorry that we didn’t have a better turn-out to-night. But I can assure the speaker that if he will come again, we shall guarantee him a capacity audience. And I may say, that if there are any members of this association who have not paid their dollar this season, they can give it either to myself or to Mr. Sibley as they pass out.”

With the amount of accumulated experience that I had behind me I was naturally interested during my lecture in England in the chairmen who were to introduce me. I cannot help but feel that I

have acquired a fine taste in chairmen. I know them just as other experts know old furniture and Pekinese dogs. The witty chairman, the prosy chairman, the solemn chairman—I know them all. As soon as I shake hands with the chairman in the Committee room I can tell exactly how he will act.

There are certain types of chairmen who have so often been described and are so familiar that it is not worth while to linger on them. Everybody knows the chairman who says—"Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have not come here to listen to *me*. So I will be very brief; in fact, I will confine my remarks to just one or two very short observations." He then proceeds to make observations for twenty-five minutes. At the end of it he remarks with charming simplicity, "Now I know that you are all impatient to hear the lecturer. . . ."

And everybody knows the chairman who comes to the meeting with a very imperfect knowledge of who or what the lecturer is, and is driven to introduce him by saying:

"Our lecturer of the evening is widely recognized as one of the greatest authorities on—on—on his subject in the world to-day. He comes to us from—from a great distance and I can assure him that it is a great pleasure to this audience to welcome a man who has done so much to—to—to advance the interests of—of—of everything as he has."

But this man, bad as he is, is not so bad as the chairman whose preparation for introducing the speaker has obviously been made at the eleventh hour. Just such a chairman it was my fate to strike in the form of a local alderman, built like an ox, in one of those small manufacturing places in the north of England where they grow men of this type and elect them into office.

"I never saw the lecturer before," he said, "but I've read his book." (I have written nineteen books.) "The committee was good enough to send me over his book last night. I didn't read it all but I took a look at the preface and I can assure him that he is very welcome. I understand he comes from a college. . . ." Then he turned directly towards me and said in a loud voice, "What was the name of that college over there you said you came from?"

"McGill," I answered equally loudly.

"He comes from McGill," the chairman boomed out. "I never heard of McGill myself but I can assure him he's welcome. He's going to lecture to us on—what did you say it was to be about?"

"It's a humorous lecture," I said.

"Ay, it's to be a humorous lecture, ladies and gentlemen, and I'll venture to say it will be a rare treat. I'm only sorry I can't stay for it myself as I have to get back over to the Town Hall for a meeting. So without more ado I'll get off the platform and let the lecturer go on with his humour."

A still more terrible type of chairman is one whose mind is evidently preoccupied and disturbed with some local happening and who comes on to the platform with a face imprinted with distress. Before introducing the lecturer he refers in moving tones to the local sorrow, whatever it is. As a prelude to a humorous lecture this is not gay.

Such a chairman fell to my lot one night before a gloomy audience in a London suburb.

"As I look about this hall to-night," he began in a doleful whine, "I see many empty seats." Here he stifled a sob. "Nor am I surprised that a great many of our people should prefer to-night to stay quietly at home—"

I had no clue to what he meant. I merely gathered that some particular sorrow must have overwhelmed the town that day.

"To many it may seem hardly fitting that after the loss our town has sustained we should come out here to listen to a humorous lecture—"

"What's the trouble?" I whispered to a citizen sitting beside me on the platform.

"Our oldest resident"—he whispered back—"he died this morning."

"How old?"

"Ninety-four," he whispered.

Meantime the chairman, with deep sobs in his voice, continued:

"We debated in our committee whether or not we should have the lecture. Had it been a lecture of another character our position would have been less difficult—"

By this time I began to feel like a criminal.

"The case would have been different had the lecture been one that contained information, or that was inspired by some serious

purpose, or that could have been of any benefit. But this is not so. We understand that this lecture which Mr. Leacock has already given, I believe, twenty or thirty times in England—"

Here he turned to me with a look of mild reproof while the silent audience, deeply moved, all looked at me as at a man who went around the country insulting the memory of the dead by giving a lecture thirty times.

"We understand, though this we shall have an opportunity of testing for ourselves presently, that Mr. Leacock's lecture is not of a character which—has not, so to speak, the kind of value—in short, is not a lecture of that class."

Here he paused and choked back a sob.

"Had our poor friend been spared to us for another six years he would have rounded out the century. But it was not to be. For two or three years past he has noted that somehow his strength was failing, that, for some reason or other, he was no longer what he had been. Last month he began to droop. Last week he began to sink. Speech left him last Tuesday. This morning he passed, and he has gone now, we trust, in safety to where there are no lectures."

The audience were now nearly in tears.

The chairman made a visible effort towards firmness and control.

"But yet," he continued, "our committee felt that in another sense it was our duty to go on with our arrangements. I think, ladies and gentlemen, that the war has taught us all that it is always our duty to 'carry on,' no matter how hard it may be, no matter with what reluctance we do it, and whatever be the difficulties and the dangers, we must carry on to the end: for after all there is an end and by resolution and patience we can reach it.

"I will, therefore, invite Mr. Leacock to deliver to us his humorous lecture, the title of which I have forgotten, but I understand it to be the same lecture which he has already given thirty or forty times in England."

But contrast with this melancholy man the genial and pleasing person who introduced me, all upside down, to a metropolitan audience.

He was so brisk, so neat, so sure of himself that it didn't seem possible that he could make any kind of a mistake. I thought it unnecessary to coach him. He seemed absolutely all right.



"It is a great pleasure"—he said, with a charming, easy appearance of being entirely at home on the platform—"to welcome here to-night our distinguished Canadian fellow citizen, Mr. Learoyd"—he turned half way towards me as he spoke with a sort of gesture of welcome, admirably executed. If only my name had been Learoyd instead of Leacock it would have been excellent.

"There are many of us," he continued, "who have awaited Mr. Learoyd's coming with the most pleasant anticipations. We seemed from his books to know him already as an old friend. In fact I think I do not exaggerate when I tell Mr. Learoyd that his name in our city has long been a household word. I have very, very great pleasure, ladies and gentlemen, in introducing to you Mr. Learoyd."

As far as I know that chairman never knew his error. At the close of my lecture he said that he was sure that the audience "were deeply indebted to Mr. Learoyd," and then with a few words of rapid, genial apology buzzed off, like a humming bird, to other avocations. But I have amply forgiven him: anything for kindness and geniality; it makes the whole of life smooth. If that chairman ever comes to my home town he is hereby invited to lunch or dine with me, as Mr. Learoyd or under any name that he selects.

Such a man is, after all, in sharp contrast to the kind of chairman who has no native sense of the geniality that ought to accompany his office. There is, for example, a type of man who thinks that the fitting way to introduce a lecturer is to say a few words about the finances of the society to which he is to lecture (for money) and about the difficulty of getting members to turn out to hear lectures.

Everybody has heard such a speech a dozen times. But it is the paid lecturer sitting on the platform who best appreciates it. It runs like this:

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, before I invite the lecturer of the evening to address us there are a few words that I would like to say. There are a good many members who are in arrears with their fees. I am aware that these are hard times and it is difficult to collect money but at the same time the members ought to remember that the expenses of the society are very heavy. The fees that are asked by the lecturers, as I suppose you know, have advanced very greatly



in the last few years. In fact I may say that they are becoming almost prohibitive."

This discourse is pleasant hearing for the lecturer. He can see the members who have not yet paid their annual dues eyeing him with hatred. The chairman goes on:

"Our finance committee were afraid at first that we could not afford to bring Mr. Leacock to our society. But fortunately through the personal generosity of two of our members who subscribed ten pounds each out of their own pockets we are able to raise the required sum."

*(Applause: during which the lecturer sits looking and feeling like the embodiment of the "required sum.")*

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," continues the chairman, "what I feel is that when we have members in the society who are willing to make this sacrifice—because it is a sacrifice, ladies and gentlemen—we ought to support them in every way. The members ought to think it their duty to turn out to the lectures. I know that it is not an easy thing to do. On a cold night, like this evening, it is hard, I admit it is hard, to turn out from the comfort of one's own fire-side and come and listen to a lecture. But I think that the members should look at it not as a matter of personal comfort but as a matter of duty towards this society. We have managed to keep this society alive for fifteen years and, though I don't say it in any spirit of boasting, it has not been an easy thing to do. It has required a good deal of pretty hard spade work by the committee. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I suppose you didn't come here to listen to me and perhaps I have said enough about our difficulties and troubles. So without more ado (this is always a favourite phrase with chairmen) I'll invite Mr. Leacock to address the society—oh, just a word before I sit down. Will all those who are leaving before the end of the lecture kindly go out through the side door and step as quietly as possible? Mr. Leacock."

Anybody who is in the lecture business knows that that introduction is far worse than being called Mr. Learoyd.

When any lecturer goes across to England from this side of the water there is naturally a tendency on the part of the chairman to play upon this fact. This is especially true in the case of a Canadian like myself. The chairman feels that the moment is fitting for one

of those great imperial thoughts that bind the British Empire together. But sometimes the expression of the thought falls short of the full glory of the conception.

Witness this (word for word) introduction that was used against me by a clerical chairman in a quiet spot in the south of England:

"Not so long ago, ladies and gentlemen," said the vicar, "we used to send out to Canada various classes of our community to help build up that country. We sent out our labourers, we sent out our scholars and professors. Indeed we even sent out our criminals. And now," with a wave of his hand towards me, "they are coming back."

There was no laughter. An English audience is nothing if not literal; and they are as polite as they are literal. They understood that I was a reformed criminal and as such they gave me a hearty burst of applause.

But there is just one thing that I would like to chronicle here in favour of the chairman and in gratitude for his assistance. Even at his worst he is far better than having no chairman at all. Over in England a great many societies and public bodies have adopted the plan of "cutting out the chairman." Wearying of his faults, they have forgotten the reasons for his existence and undertaken to do without him.

The result is ghastly. The lecturer steps up on to the platform alone and unaccompanied. There is a feeble ripple of applause; he makes his miserable bow and explains with as much enthusiasm as he can who he is. The atmosphere of the thing is so cold that an Arctic expedition isn't in it with it. I found also the further difficulty that in the absence of the chairman very often the audience, or a large part of it, doesn't know who the lecturer is. On many occasions I received on appearing a wild burst of applause under the impression that I was somebody else. I have been mistaken in this way for Mr. Briand, then Prime Minister of France, for Charlie Chaplin, for Mrs. Asquith—but stop, I may get into a libel suit. All I mean is that without a chairman "we celebrities" get terribly mixed up together.

To one experience of my tour as a lecturer I shall always be able to look back with satisfaction. I nearly had the pleasure of killing a man with laughing; and this in the most literal sense. American lecturers have often dreamed of doing this. I nearly did it. The man

in question was a comfortable apoplectic-looking man with the kind of merry rubicund face that is seen in countries where they don't have prohibition. He was seated near the back of the hall and was laughing uproariously. All of a sudden I realized that something was happening. The man had collapsed sideways on to the floor; a little group of men gathered about him; they lifted him up and I could see them carrying him out, a silent and inert mass. As in duty bound I went right on with my lecture. But my heart beat high with satisfaction. I was sure that I had killed him. The reader may judge how high these hopes rose when a moment or two later a note was handed to the chairman who then asked me to pause for a moment in my lecture and stood up and asked, "Is there a doctor in the audience?" A doctor rose and silently went out. The lecture continued; but there was no more laughter; my aim had now become to kill another of them and they knew it. They were aware that if they started laughing they might die. In a few minutes a second note was handed to the chairman. He announced very gravely, "A second doctor is wanted." The lecture went on in deeper silence than ever. All the audience were waiting for a third announcement. It came. A new message was handed to the chairman. He rose and said, "If Mr. Murchison, the undertaker, is in the audience, will he kindly step outside."

"That man, I regret to say, got well. Disappointing though it is to read it, he recovered. I sent back next morning from London a telegram of enquiry (I did it in reality so as to have a proper proof of his death) and received the answer, "Patient doing well; is sitting up in bed and reading Lord Haldane's *Relativity*; no danger of relapse."

# SO THIS IS THE UNITED STATES

## A SIX WEEKS' THOROUGH SURVEY

AS MADE BY A LECTURER FROM ENGLAND

THE desire to visit the United States had been to me for many years a cherished ambition. My admiration for American life and character, which I am glad to set down here and which my publishers are at liberty to use in any way they like, led me to wish for a nearer view of a country which had so deeply impressed me both physically and geographically, as well as financially. Moreover, the increasing vogue of my books in America guaranteed a warm welcome. My American readers were multiplying rapidly; almost every day I received letters which read:

*Dear Sir or Madam: (the word "madam" being carefully crossed out to signify that the writer knew that I was not a woman)—"As an autograph collector I would be glad to add your autograph to my list which already includes those of Mr. Bernard Shaw, Mr. H. G. Wells, the King of Siam and some others which I can't remember. Kindly pay your own postage. The others did."*

To such tributes were joined the casual remarks of a number of chance acquaintances. An American gentleman whom I met in the Piccadilly Bar told me that he had read one of my books (he was sure it must have been mine) while suffering from insomnia on a voyage from San Francisco to Pago Pago. He was certain, at any rate, that it was Pago Pago.

To this was added a very cordial, direct invitation from the Cunard-White Star Steamship Company who had apparently heard of my interest in America. The company wrote:

*This is travel year. Why not cross the Atlantic? The holding of the International Steam Fitters' Convention, the first in a hundred*



*years of steam fitting, at Pittsburgh, Pa., seems to offer a splendid opportunity and invitation.*

The final incentive was given by a very flattering proposition sent to me by one of the leading lecture bureaus of the United States. It ran:

*Dear Sir or Madam: The increasing popularity in America of your books (books, speeches or sermons, as the case may be) leads us to invite you to make a lecture tour in the United States, regardless of expense, as we don't pay it, giving us 80 per cent of your gross receipts and the rest in cash. We may add that the holding of the International Steam Fitters' Convention at Pittsburgh seems to offer a special opportunity and invitation.*

Without fully comprehending the financial terms, expressed with typical American generosity, I decided to go.

My journey across the Atlantic was one of unparalleled pleasure and comfort, and if the Cunard-White Star Company care to say I said so, they are at liberty to do so. In the intervals of idle day-dreaming in the saloon bar of the palatial liner in which I had engaged my passage (I will name it if the company likes), I was able to put the finishing touches to the lecture that I was to deliver in the States. The bartender to whom I read portions of it said that it seemed to him A-1: He said he had heard a lecture at Schenectady, but failed to recall what it was about.

The reader may judge with what a thrill of fascinated interest I caught sight, from the sea, of the skyline of the skyscrapers of New York. One got from the prospect an impression of something one could scarcely convey in words, though I shall keep working on it.

At the customs house in New York, where I met with every courtesy and politeness, an inspector asked if I had anything of value to declare. I said that apart from my bag with my personal belongings and my lecture suit, I carried nothing but my lecture itself. He looked at it, shook his head, and said there was nothing to pay, the duty being *ad valorem* only. I said that he had better perhaps read the lecture and he answered with characteristic American courtesy that he would see me I forget where.

This characteristic American courtesy I soon found to be characteristic of America. In New York, in spite of the rush and pressure



of American life, there is always this same courteous desire to please, a willingness to break away from the claims of business in order to extend courtesy to strangers. On my first morning in the city, I presented my letter of recommendation to the manager of one of the biggest banks of the city, remarking on having been impressed, in a way I could scarcely convey, by the skyline of the skyscrapers. He immediately asked me had I been up on the Empire State building, rang the bell for a clerk and insisted on my going at once, urging me to spend at least an hour, or better still to stay there all day.

The head librarian of one of the great city libraries, to whom I presented my card, asked me if I was interested in Assyrian literature and at once took me to a roomful of it, and told me, as he closed the door on me, to read it all.

I duly visited the offices of the lecture bureau under whose auspices I was to make my tour, and found the personnel of the bureau extremely friendly and obliging. The courteous manager immediately asked me whether I had enough money for current necessities and hearing that I had more than enough, at once arranged to take charge of the balance. The rapidity with which money is moved like this in America is most gratifying. The manager then asked me whether I had had lunch, and urged me to go and get it without delay.

On returning next day to the bureau, I learned that the opening lecture of my tour was not to be given in New York (owing to the question of over-crowding), but in a place "up state." For the benefit of English readers I may explain that the whole of the United States is divided into States, such as New York State, Boston, The District of Columbia, Ontario, and so forth. My lecture, I found, was to be delivered at the Ladies' Musical Club at Hicksville, the subject of the address being *Charlemagne*.

This was, as a matter of fact, the topic on which I proposed to lecture every time during my tour. Such a thing is easily possible in America; owing to the great size of the country the lecturer can take a train after his lecture, and get away to another state before the news of his last night's meeting. He is thus always twelve hours ahead of his lecture. All that is needed is a second lecture for the return tour, which can, however, without difficulty be written on the back of the first. In my own case, I decided to lecture from New

York to San Francisco on *Charlemagne, the Man*, then to turn round and lecture on the way back on *Charlemagne, the Boy*. I had selected this subject of Charlemagne because in America it is absolutely necessary that the topic should have novelty, and at the same time there is an unwritten law against bringing in politics, sex or race, while such topics as religion and Christianity are naturally offensive. Liquor must not be mentioned, nor must the lecturer introduce the name of the President or of God. It is well to keep away from labour, fascism, and communism. All of this had been very carefully explained to me and had led me to select the subject of Charlemagne.

My reception at Hicksville was cordiality and kindness itself. From the station, which the Americans call a depot (but they mean a station), I was driven by the husband of one of the ladies to the lady's house, where we had cocktails with a group of friends; after we had had three, at the suggestion of one of the other ladies, we stepped across to her house close by and had three more. The lecture hour, however, being almost come, there was just time for two more at the house of another friend, a minister, who lived just over the street. I found indeed that the habit of giving the lecturer and his audience plenty of cocktails before the talk is universal in America. It might indeed be commended to our restless audiences at home, always loud with interruptions and disturbance. In the United States it is not good form to interrupt a lecture. The audience remain absolutely quiet, the room being suitably darkened. The lecturer, after being introduced, is shown to a quiet corner of the platform where there is a table with a lamp on it, beside which he reads his lecture. It is thought very bad taste to leave the place while he is still reading, or seeming to read. In fact the utmost courtesy is extended to him to enable him thus to read to himself till he is finished.

At Hicksville I met the first of such delightful American audiences. It being a leafy night in June, very quiet and balmy, there was an intense stillness, which made it difficult to realize that the audience was there. I read my lecture in a suitably low voice for almost an hour and a half, following Charlemagne from Poitou to Poitiers and then from Poitiers back to Poitou. After the lecture was over we went over to a very pleasant house and had some more

cocktails in a large and comfortable library. The minister of whom I spoke, in thanking me for the lecture, said that the small size of the audience—thirty-five—was because the weather was so fine as to keep the young people out of doors, and yet still cool enough to keep the old people in. A Hicksville audience, he said, was very distinctive; it was hard to get them to turn out, and hard to warm them up, and difficult to get them to let themselves go, but if they ever turned out and warmed up and let go, they were a great audience. He said a lot of them were getting a lot more out of my lecture than you'd think they were. He told me that he himself was thinking of going into life insurance as it offered better openings for the ministry.

My experience at Hicksville was pleasantly repeated on later evenings at Heckville in Connecticut and in Huckville, Maine. In each place, unfortunately, the coolness of the evening still imprisoned the old people, while its freshness tempted away the young. I put down in my notes this temptation of the young and the imprisonment of the old as typical of American life. As I said later on to the janitor of Harvard, there was something psychologically interesting in this idea if one could only seize it. But I admitted that I could not seize it and he said he couldn't either. Naturally it followed as a matter of course that if I couldn't, he couldn't; but it is typical of the equality of American life that he wouldn't see this. Indeed, I found so many things in America typical of American life that I found it difficult to get hold of them fast enough. This itself is very characteristic of America.

But I pass over lightly my visits to the various small towns of New England. As my reference to the janitor has suggested, it was my appearance at Harvard University that I anticipated as the chief feature of my tour in the Eastern part of the States in which it lies. I may mention for the benefit of my readers that the Eastern half of the United States faces east, and the Western half faces west. In between lies the space called the Middle West facing apparently nowhere.

As I said, Harvard was the Mecca of my visit. I recognized in it the intellectual centre of America and was anxious to test it out by trying it on myself. How would it measure up beside me? A great number of English lecturers have tried this comparison but

it hasn't worked. All of them, while speaking kindly of Harvard, are forced to admit that it still lacks something.

In my own case I did not have the pleasure of lecturing at Harvard. This was disappointing, as Charlemagne would have been just the right thing for them, whereas in the smaller towns of New England the confusion between Charlemagne and Lake Champlain had been painfully apparent. But a Harvard audience would have grasped in a minute that Charlemagne, pronounced as I do it with a hard N and a liquid G—and I take my time to it—would have grasped that Charlemagne was a Frenchman. However, the arrangement for a lecture at Harvard fell through at the last moment, that is to say, up to the last minute the lecture bureau hadn't made any arrangement, and at the last minute it was too late to make any. I have noticed that a great many English visiting lecturers find their lectures at Harvard fall through at the last moment, some even before.

However, I passed a wonderful day of day-dreaming in and around Harvard, first of all in the hotel because I needed sleep after a night's journey from Pawchunk, Maine, and afterwards at intervals on benches among the elm trees. But I had, at the same time, an excellent opportunity for making a study of the University itself, having the good luck to find a disengaged janitor—it was his day off—who took me round what he called the Yard and showed me the principal buildings, giving me much information in regard to the professoriate and their classes. I was able therefore to make a great many very interesting comparisons as between Harvard and our own universities. The standard of culture at Harvard, though high, is below our own, the janitor not speaking English at all as well as I do. The students at Harvard are marked with great politeness and courteousness, all those whom I met about the entrance of the buildings showing a polite desire to move away instantly on my coming, and a reluctance to answer questions. There were, however, one or two marked exceptions to this, a few students coming forward with information of the greatest use for my notebook—in regard to such things as the new courses on butchering, and the research seminar in hair-cutting for the barbers' post-graduate course. Of the professoriate, unfortunately, I saw nothing, it being the month of June during which, the students told



me, they are all either in Europe, or taking their afternoon rest, or doing research work in Boston.

After leaving Harvard I visited a number of the New England colleges, such as Amherst where there is an excellent lunch room close to the railway station; Williams, from which the busses very conveniently leave every half hour, and Dartmouth, which can only be reached in the middle of the night but which contains the best barber shop I had yet seen outside of New York. At Smith College, devoted only to women, I was unable to obtain an entrée—I mean, to get in. Of Bowdoin I saw hardly enough to form a judgment, merely changing trains at the junction there. Yet I was glad to have had the opportunity of seeing American academic life and comparing it with our own. The janitors are everywhere a fine class of men, very much interested in their students, and proud of their institution. All of them regretted that I did not have an opportunity to lecture in their college, my lectures, owing to the season of the year, being in the towns only.

I pass over, for the moment, the itinerary of my lecture tour among these smaller places—such as Pleasantville, Massachusetts—Pleasantville, New York—Pleasantville, New Jersey, and Pleasantville, Pennsylvania. I pass it over, I say, for the moment, but, naturally I shall come to it later on if the reader waits for it. But for the moment I am anxious to pass on to Pittsburgh, towards which my course was directed and which seemed to me hardly second in interest to New York or Harvard. Pittsburgh, I may explain to those of my readers who don't know the fact already (I didn't, so a lot of them won't), is situated at the junction of the Allegheny, the Monongahela and the Ohio, all three of which here come together. At Pittsburgh I found again the same courtesy among the great business men as in New York. Having mentioned to a great leader of industry to whom I presented my card, that I had never seen a blast furnace, he at once rang for a clerk and instructed him to take me to one immediately and to pick a hot one.

After leaving Pittsburgh I had hoped to find myself in the Middle West, and expectation all the keener as I was unusually interested in what my impressions of the Middle West were going to be. So many English lecturers have regretted that they were unable to see the Middle West that I hoped to act as a discoverer.



But I confess that as far as my own impressions are concerned, the Middle West is non-existent, as I couldn't find it. In Chicago every one disclaimed the idea that their city was in the Middle West, they said it was East; so, too, at St. Louis the Middle West had not begun, and at Omaha it was all over. In Memphis, Tennessee, I found that I was in the Old South, and in Missouri—among the better class people—still in the Confederate States. In Minneapolis, I had reached the North, beyond which was only Winnipeg, where the price of wheat was too low for me to lecture.

The Lecture Bureau having arranged this part of my tour in what are called "long jumps," I was shot up and down all over the country in nightly leaps, and may have passed through the Middle West in my sleep. I don't mention this arrangement of long jumps in any spirit of criticism or as wishing in any way to discourage other English lecturers. Experience shows that this is the only way to handle an English lecturer in this central part of the United States. He must be moved fast, the people being of a nervous temperament and often acting on impulse.

One peculiar advantage I derived, however, from my transit of the area where the Middle West should begin, was that I was enabled to visit the "centre of population" of the United States. I have no idea how this extraordinary place is selected or nominated, whether by general vote, or by means of what are called "primaries." Nor must I attempt to explain to my English readers what a primary is, because he wouldn't get it. Suffice it to say that when a person is to be elected to anything in the United States, he is first elected in a primary, then in a secondary, then in a tertiary, and so on. Hence, for all I know, the centre of population may be chosen by the primaries. But the amazing thing is that there are hardly any people in the place at all. The centre, at present—I say at present advisedly, for they keep changing it—is out in the country in a state called Indiana, being almost three miles east of Linton Post Office—the only way of keeping track of it. It is characteristic of this restlessness of American Democracy that they keep changing the centre of population. In the past, Baltimore and Columbus and other cities have been selected, but the choice

now goes to much smaller places. Indeed, inquiry on the spot showed that there weren't any people on the spot.

It was while making these reflections that I found myself arrived at Chicago, a vast city, situated at the foot of Lake Michigan, one of the chain of Great Lakes which, as British readers will recall, join the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Chicago was to be, contrary to my expectation, the end of my itinerary.

The Bureau had decided not to carry my lectures beyond Chicago. There were three reasons for this; (1) That I might find the summer heat very trying; (2) the doubt whether the hotels were comfortable enough for me, and (3) the certainty that there was no money in it. This shortening of my tour was to me a great disappointment. I was most anxious to see what impressions Hollywood might make on me and whether I could set it down in words, or merely convey it into acts. It would be of interest, too, to see my reaction to San Francisco and the Alcatraz Prison. Many Americans had very specially recommended me to see the insides of the prisons, and to stay there. Alcatraz, they said, would be the best.

All this, however, was not to be. Chicago was to be my goal, and from Chicago strangely enough my lecture tour was to change from the quiet itinerary which I have described to the extraordinary sensation which has led finally to my deportation from the United States. To think that all this originated from my casual reference to Chicago, in my opening lecture, as a "city of murderers." The words were used in the most harmless way without the least intention to offend. American opinion, however, is so peculiarly sensitive, one might almost say touchy, that a casual remark of this kind, meant in perfect good nature, is apt to be taken up wrongly. But I anticipate—an inveterate habit of mine when I get interesting.

My reference to murderers arose from very simple circumstances. On my arrival in Chicago a courteous member of the committee had called for me with a car and asked me whether I would prefer to go and visit the University, which he said covered two square miles (I forget if it was two or twenty)—at any rate, whether I would visit the University, or pay a visit to the art galleries, or would like to drive down town and have a drink at his club.

On our way to his club I was immensely struck by the Lake Front and said so to my host, telling him at the same time that he might

make any use of my remark that he liked. The vast boulevards that carried us along Lake Michigan, the lake at that moment being lashed into what I described to my companion as "mimic fury" (told him to put it in the papers if he wished to), gave me the impression of size, of water, in fact the idea of a big lake which, as I said to my host, I seemed able to seize but not to convey. He told me to hold on to it.

At the club my host introduced me to several of his friends, many of them University men and nearly as well educated as I am. Our talk, that of men of culture, fell on drink, prohibition, women, and naturally murder. One of the men present was kind enough to give me some statistics on the subject for my book, which I wrote down with no intention of using them in my lecture. But my reader will be amazed as I was to learn of the appalling growth of homicide in Chicago; the figures given by my informant reached to one hundred per day and perhaps fifty per night, when they can't see so well to get at them.

On the strength of this information, when lecturing on Charlemagne that afternoon before the Ladies' Mandolin and Banjo Club, I used the harmless phrase "your city of murderers." The effect was extraordinary. I had hardly returned to the hotel before three young men with flashlight cameras came to get my picture and the newspapers next morning carried headlines, "A City of Murderers." The next afternoon, by special invitation, I gave a lecture on "Murder" at the University, using of course my lecture on Charlemagne but making a parallel between Charlemagne and Al Capone, and deriving both their names from the idea of big stuff. The effect was heightened by the Press christening me the "Man with the Poison Tongue." The civic authorities gave me twenty-four hours to get out of the city, beyond which they could not be responsible.

The time, however, was more than what I needed. I had already received a telegram from the head office of the Lecture Bureau: *Call Pittsburgh something*. Like a flash, in fact in less than half an hour, I named it "The City of Filth" and received back an answer: *Special lecture arranged with Clean Government League on the platform with filth as the background*. My return lecture at Pittsburgh was to have been, as already indicated, on Charlemagne, the Boy, to be delivered before the Young People's Astronomical So-

ciety. But, as I say, the Bureau easily arranged a second lecture on the subject—"The City of Filth"—at which I had with me on the platform a number of city aldermen and twenty of the clergy of the city, all of them known to be absolutely clean. I used, of course, my prepared lecture on Charlemagne, the Boy, but dealt with him from the point of view of filth. I made it clear all through, by inference, that if Charlemagne had been as dirty as the average Pittsburgh boy, even the Franks would have had no use for him.

My Pittsburgh lecture was followed next morning by a telegram from the Boston office of the Bureau which read:

*"Please send names for Cleveland, Detroit, Buffalo and, if possible, for New York. Meantime every one here is delighted by your calling Harvard the Cess-pool of Conservatism. A lecture has been arranged for you in the big hall of the Union, the local committee agreeing that you lecture on Charlemagne, the Boy beside the Cess-pool. Arrangements are being made for the students to throw you into the Charles River after the lecture."*

This was, indeed, a gratifying prospect. The reader will recall that on the occasion of my previous visit my offer to lecture at Harvard, referring to it as the Oxford of America, had come to nothing. The interest shown in the proposal was very small and the attempt of the Lecture Bureau to get the students to mob me after the lecture met with complete indifference. But now this generous offer to throw me into the Charles guaranteed me the kind of reception a foreign lecturer does not readily forget.

The invitation from Harvard was followed, as might be expected, by a rival invitation from Yale. I say "as might be expected," though my English readers cannot possibly tell what I mean until I add that if Harvard is the Oxford of America, Yale, situated at New Haven in Connecticut, may be called its Cambridge. What one does today, the other did yesterday. Hence there followed an invitation from Yale accepting my idea of a lecture on "New Haven as New Heaven" and carrying with it a promise to throw me into Long Island Sound, a greater distance than at Harvard.

I have not space here to narrate my gratifying success, both on the platform and in the river, at Harvard; nor were the Yale students any less enthusiastic; the Dean of one of the faculties, in



introducing me, said that he hoped that after the lecture nothing would be done unbecoming to the high reputation of the college for fair play; he had heard, he said, a rumour that the lecturer would be thrown in the river. He hoped not; something had been said of Long Island Sound. Was this wise? But without further ado he would introduce the lecturer.

Unfortunately a students' dance after the lecture absorbed the attention of the undergraduates and they had no time to devote to me, but at any rate, several of them assured me of what they would do if I came again.

After my conspicuous success in the greater cities and colleges, I need say little of my triumphs in lesser places. The indignation created at Rome by my referring to it as "Water Tank Seventeen, New York Central," guaranteed a capacity audience. The people of Buffalo turned out in thousands to see the man who had called their city the Old Man's Home. In fact I realized that I had unearthed a profound truth in American psychology. The Americans, if you praise them, fall asleep. Curse them and they are right there. They like it. When I get time, I shall hope in my forthcoming *Impressions of America* (copies may be ordered now before I write it) to develop this idea more fully. At present I just state it as it stands. Hence the contrast between the drowsy audiences that heard me talk on Charlemagne, the Man and the excited crowds who listened to my lecture on Charlemagne, the Boy.

The unsophisticated reader (most of my readers are unsophisticated) may wonder how it was possible for me under these circumstances to deliver a lecture on the boyhood of Charlemagne and have it accepted as a matter of interest. The reason is very simple. The newspapers always explained that the lecture was filled with veiled illusions to city politics.

Take for example my return lecture in Hicksville, the upstate town where I opened my tour. This was to me the most interesting evening, and the most characteristic of what I have elsewhere called the American temperament (I thought of it myself). I have spoken of the drowsy quiet of the town on my first coming. It seemed now an entirely different place inhabited by another set of people. I had called it, to a Boston reporter, the "Moron Municipality." This led at once to an invitation from the town council to speak as their



guest. The hall and the adjacent streets were packed with listeners. In my talk on Charlemagne, the Boy, every hidden reference to Hicksville went right home. In fact it was understood that "Charlemagne" was just a clever name for Charlie Maine, who had been Superintendent of Education the year before last and was to run again. The mayor of Hicksville, who was in the chair, joined good-naturedly in the laugh over my reference to the Mayors of the Palace. He told me afterward that my talk would do a lot to clean up Hicksville town politics which, it appeared, were inconceivably dirty. The mayor got me out of town in his car from the backstage door of the hall.

My biggest triumph should have been my concluding lecture in New York. I had called the city "God's Grave" and there had been a protest from many of the clergy against the blasphemy of the term. Success seemed certain when word came from Washington of the order for my deportation from the United States, and the lecture was cancelled. The order was not unexpected. It had been hinted that I was about to call Washington "The Whited Sepulchre," and was trying to find a name for the president, a thing not yet done. The order for deportation has ended all this, and terminates my American visit.

I have prepared for the press a farewell interview in which I speak of the great heart of America. Anybody who would like this interview can call here at Ellis Island and get it. Meantime an enthusiastic article in the New York press under the title *Kicked Out* suggests that I might go and say some dirty things about my own country. The idea strikes me as so good that I wonder I never tried it. The only question is whether they are quite up to it at home.

## THE HIDDEN SECRET OF THE CITY

EVERY year when the good old summertime begins I feel that longing to turn my back—all of it—on the city, which is probably felt by nine city dwellers out of ten. Not for me the roar of the metropolis. Let me feel the new-mown hay blow in my face and let me hear the trout stream gurgle under the fallen logs in the bush. I know all that can be said in favor of the city. I admit that it palpitates with intellectual life, that it throbs with the conscious power of collective thought. But not for me—not a palpitation, not a throb!

The truth is, and I don't mind admitting it at this time of year, I am afraid, and always have been, of a great city and of the kind of people who live in it. Like everybody else who has come off a farm—our homestead was in Georgina Township, up in Ontario; perhaps you know it?—I have never felt at ease with high class city people, with financial magnates, great criminal lawyers, bank presidents and scintillating literary wits. I always felt that the wits might start something or the magnates sit on something or the great criminal lawyer might say something. Anybody from the country knows the feeling. As to the bankers, everybody knows that these men hold the world in the hollow of their hand; if they lift their thumb over we go. So I am uneasy with them. I don't want them to lift it while I'm round.

But that feeling is all gone since an experience I had just a little while ago. It was my fate to have to give an address at one of the biggest luncheon clubs on the *Diplomatic Situation in Europe*, in one of the biggest hotels of one of our cities before some of the biggest men in the country. If anything sounds bigger than that, I don't hear it. It was certainly a distinguished crowd. As I looked round at the vast glittering hotel dining-room, filled with hundreds and hundreds of what I knew were typical city men, leaders in business and finance and the professions, I felt appalled. It seemed

impossible that I could dare to speak to them.

So there I sat, at the head of the table, in the very centre of that marvellous gathering, making conversation as best I could. Beside me was the president of one of the biggest banks in the world, a fine, dignified man who looked the part. I wouldn't have dared to borrow \$5 from him, if I was dying.

I talked as best I could; and presently, by chance, I mentioned Ohio. "I come from there," he said, and then added, as if owning up to something, like an honest man, "we had a farm there; as a matter of fact, I have it still." The moment he said that I felt easier. "Did you?" I said. "I was brought up on a farm in Ontario—Georgina Township—we had a hundred acres, counting the bush." "We had more than that," said the bank president; "we had over five hundred"—then he realized, like the kindly man he is, that he had said a rather brutal thing, as between farmers, and he added at once: "Of course, the old homestead wasn't as much as that at first; we only had a quarter section less sixty acres. But later when Uncle Bill went out West we had his half section, less the road allowance of four rods that went right across the place just behind the homestead."

The words were like music! "Quarter sections" and "homesteads," and relations called "Uncle Bill," and things measured in "rods"! That's the language I like to hear! I felt at home at once.

With that we were started. Five minutes later, if the conversation of that great financier had been reported, it would have run like this: "You can do better with soy beans for hogs than you can in trying to raise grain for them. Put in your soy beans, with a cover crop first—"

But I had to interrupt him there. "Soy beans are all right," I said, "if the land is clean enough." And with that we were absorbed; gone was all the glitter and the form and pomp of the occasion. The bank president was back in Ohio and I was back in Georgina Township (next to North Gwillimbury, you can't miss it; take the town line past the old Prosser place) and he was feeding hogs on soy beans, and I was objecting that if he didn't raise any wheat he'd have no straw for bedding, and he admitted it. Think of a man in his position sleeping on straw!

All of a sudden I remembered, we both seemed to remember,

where we were. Imagine talking farm stuff in a gathering like that! And in the silence that fell for the moment between us, I listened and caught a little of the talk of the group of men—presidents of this, and vice-presidents of that—who sat at the table just beneath the head table that was ours. One man I noticed in particular, a dignified figure, the face of a diplomat. He was saying to the man beside him: "Don't talk to me of leghorn hens! I won't have them on my place. You waste your money in trying to put a twelve-foot wire fence round a leghorn, and even then they'll fly over it. No, sir, I admit they lay, but give me a heavy fowl, a Barred Rock or a Black Jersey Giant, and you've got something! They'll lay pretty good, and they're a table bird and you don't have to chase them all over the place!"

"But wait a minute," objected the man next to him. "You can't make them pay!"

I listened, fascinated! They were talking of that wonderful, vital question, "Can hens be made to pay?"

"They do pay!" said the first man. "Out at my place in Indiana last week we showed a clear profit on them!"

He didn't say how much: no one was cruel enough to ask. But I knew, because my hens back in Ontario have been showing a clear profit right along, a total of sixty cents in November (and mind, I've only two hundred hens) and eight cents in December and this last month over a dollar! So I understood just what was meant. That banker, I suppose, wouldn't take any special joy in a corporation that would pay a dividend on \$5,000,000; but to make a profit, an actual profit, on hens (not counting, of course, your own time, nor the hired man's time, nor the odd months when they don't lay)—Ah! that is high finance!

So after that I felt easier. And when I realized that my neighbour on the left was talking about trout fishing in an Indiana creek, and the man next him was spearing suckers with a jack light, then it was all too easy.

So when I got up to speak I knew that I was among friends, men whose thoughts I could share, whose sympathies I could call forth.

"In rising, gentlemen," I said, "to speak on this matter of the Diplomatic Situation in Europe, I find myself in no little difficulty. I have just come down here from my farm—a little place that I call



my farm—in Simcoe County, Ontario, where I have, gentlemen, nearly ten acres, without counting two acres of bush.”

I could feel a distinct wave of interest pass over the audience. They seemed to draw their chairs sympathetically nearer to me.

“Yes, gentlemen,” I continued, “ten acres and a little bush. The bush, I admit, is mostly soft maple and ash with a little black birch, and I know that you will at once tell me that you don’t call that first-class hard wood. No, neither do I. But it is easy to cut, gentlemen, and you can get in there with your portable saw most any time. But, as I say, in regard to this Diplomatic Situation in Europe, I went up to my place then—it’s just off the Muskoka Highway; if any of you come up ask at Hatley’s store—to work up this question, and I found it hard to do so. You see, gentlemen, we had, in our section, as no doubt you had, a rather mean spring this year—an early thaw that took off the snow and that sharp frost that winter-killed a lot of the fall wheat.”

All over the audience I could see men nodding in confirmation. “It hit the apple trees hard, gentlemen; I lost about half a dozen McIntosh red, just coming nicely into bearing. I know you’ll at once all ask me why I hadn’t banked them up with manure in the fall. Well, I’ll tell you, gentlemen, I don’t believe in it. No, sir!”

I could sense sensation, denial and corroboration rippling all round among the audience.

“I hold that if you bank up your young trees that way, you *soften* them. They lose body and the fruit is never really firm; and, what’s more, gentlemen, you have all kinds of bugs, as you know, getting round your roots. Well, I wouldn’t enlarge on it!”

I could hear a sigh of disappointment.

“All I’m saying,” I went on, “is that what with one thing and another there was too much to do round the place to let me get at this question of the Diplomatic Situation in Europe, on which I was invited here to address you. You know how crowded a man gets on a little place like that, especially just at seeding time with everything coming on at once. You haven’t the leisure, the spare time, of city folks. And then I was specially anxious, gentlemen, as soon as the spell of really fine weather should set in, I was specially anxious to have another try at early cucumbers. I don’t



know whether any of you gentlemen have ever tried early cucumbers—”

Had they? I could see by the thrill of excitement, the tenseness of this luncheon audience, that they all had!

“But if you *have*, then you know that early cucumbers are a mighty speculative thing! It takes nerve! One nasty frost and you may lose a dozen plants at a crack. You don’t feel safe, at least not up with us, not clear through till the first of June. You can start them all right, that’s not the trouble, I admit, but it’s when you come to *set them out!*”

They were listening, breathless.

“The gentleman sitting next to me but one—who is, I understand, a member of your State Senate—says he does fairly well with his cucumbers by starting them in a greenhouse. He says that last year he had eight, or was it nine, really fine plants, started that way, though he admits he took a lot of trouble with them. But I don’t think, gentlemen, that you’ll ever enjoy the flavour in a cucumber started in a greenhouse. Now, I’ll tell you my plan—and I give it you for what it’s worth.”

There was tense excitement now all over the audience.

“You take an old sod and cut it with your jack-knife into about a four-inch square, turn it upside down and put your seed into that!”

Sensation!

“Then take your sods and set them in rows in a hot bed with lots of first-class manure, gentlemen—and I know I need not tell men like you that when I say manure, I mean real manure with lots of body, not just a lot of dry straw. You want heat. But I need not tell men like you what manure is. Use lots of it and tramp it well down, till you’re satisfied. Give it a four-inch layer of the best dirt you can lay your hands on, put your sods on, and you’ll get real results.

“But what I mean about this Diplomatic Situation in Europe is that I didn’t get time to work it up; in fact, to be quite frank, I’ll go so far as to say that I don’t give a damn about it anyway! I’d rather be up on my ten-acre farm setting out cucumbers than loafing round all the Chancelleries of Europe, or whatever they call them—and unless I am much mistaken, so would you, every one of you!”

There was deafening applause. They said it was one of the

finest talks they'd heard for years. And later the reporters of the papers—you know how clever those boys are—had it all fixed up under the heading "*Home Agricultural Interest First Claim on Nation,*" and so I saw what I had really meant.

But meantime I had drifted out of the place and over to one of the big city clubs, feeling pretty well elated. Till now, though my friends have often been kind enough to put me up, I've been afraid to go into those metropolitan Clubs. But this time I walked into the lounge-room of one of the swellest of them with absolute confidence. I was beginning to understand the city.

It was the quiet hour of the club day, the early afternoon. There was hardly anyone in the lounge except a couple of ministers—clergymen. I knew what they were by their quiet black dress and their kind serious faces. One of them, I could see by his gaiters, must be an Episcopal bishop. I didn't want to overhear their talk, as I felt sure it would deal with some of their spiritual ministrations, and be, in a way, private. But I couldn't help it. The Bishop was saying:

"Then just as she seemed to be getting along so well, something went wrong." He paused and shook his head and repeated "something went wrong!"

"Till then," the other asked anxiously, "she had seemed quite all right?"

"Quite," said the Bishop. "Quite! A little restless, perhaps, at times. But then I thought that meant merely that the flies were troubling her. She'd been giving eight to ten quarts every morning and at least six at night. . . ."

"Perhaps," said the other in gentle admonishment, "perhaps you put her on the grass too early?"

"She hadn't been on the grass," said the Bishop slowly, and added with a groan, "We were still feeding her chop!"

There was a pause, I could see that they were old friends, and that argument was painful to them, yet the lesser clergyman said firmly, "I know we mustn't dispute it again; but don't you think, perhaps, that Holsteins—I say it with all gentleness . . ."

I rose and moved quietly away. I knew that they were going to talk of the unsolved problem of the Holstein versus the Jersey cow, beside which squaring the circle is child's play: but I couldn't bear

to hear it; our last little Jersey—but no, no, never mind. The country, too, like the city, has its sharp tragedies.

. . . . .

So now, I know the city and I'm not afraid of it. I understand city men. As they sit in their palatial hotels they are dreaming of morning mists rising off the pasture in the river valley. As they study at their meals their bills of fare, they are not looking at such items as Pâté Bourguignon à la Marengo, which the Chef sticks on the list to remind himself of France. What they are trying to find is Flop-Over pancakes, Honey, and Liver and Bacon à la Wabash. And when the orchestra starts its softest music, they'll close their eyes and hear the drone of the cow-bells in the bush.

The Great City! There's no such place. It's just where people go, bravely enough, to earn the money to get back home.

I know now that I can go down to Wall Street, New York, with a bag of soy beans under one arm and a hen under the other, and borrow all the money I want.



## FOIBLES AND FOLLIES





## ARE WITTY WOMEN ATTRACTIVE TO MEN?

SLAVES murmur to one another in their chains. They whisper what they think of their masters. In the same way the generality of men, being enslaved by women, whisper, when in safety, what they think. Slave No. 1 in his Club murmurs to Slave No. 2 that women have no sense of humour. Slave No. 2 agrees, and Slave No. 3, overhearing from his armchair, says quite boldly, "They certainly have not." After which quite a colloquy ensues among the slaves. But when the wife of Slave No. 1 asks at dinner what was the talk at the Club, he answers, "Oh, nothing much." Yet his inmost feeling is that women have no sense of humour, and if a woman is witty, she has somehow come by it wrongly. He daren't speak right out, but I will speak for him.

Having been asked to answer the question, "Are witty women attractive to men," I answer decidedly, "No." Having said this I dodge behind the Editor and explain it.

There are, of course, a lot of immediate qualifications to be made to it. In the first place, are witty people in general attractive to anybody? Not as a rule. They get tiresome. It is terribly hard to be witty without getting conceited about it. I used to be very witty myself, till I learned to be careful about it. People don't like it. There are two things in ordinary conversation which ordinary people dislike—information and wit. Most people—most men at any rate—like to gather up information out of the *Digests*, which are the passion of the hour. But they won't take it from you. You're not a *Digest*. So, too, with wit. They've learned by experience that if they laugh at one thing, they'll have to go on. . . . So if this applies to men with men, it applies all the more to men with women. Luckily women don't go in for information; or if they give it, it is so incorrect as to be harmless.

In the next place, it goes without saying that some witty women are attractive to some men. This, by a happy disposition of providence, happens to all kinds of women, like attracting unlike. Hence witty women always have silent husbands. That's why they got married. There is a particularly decent type of man who finds it restful not to have to talk. When, in his youth, he meets a girl who talks all the time, that exactly suits him. He doesn't have to say anything. Ten years later you'll see them enter a drawing room together. The host says to the man, "Looks like an early winter," and he answers, "Certainly does!" The host says, "Have a cocktail," and he answers, "Certainly will." By that time his wife has started in on the conversation; he doesn't have to talk any more. People commonly call this type an adoring husband. He isn't. His wife is just a sort of fire screen. The real adoring husband overtalks his wife, overdominates her, pays with unexpected presents for easy forgiveness of his ill temper, and never knows that he adored her till it is too late, because now she cannot hear it. . . .

We will add another qualification, that one reason why some men don't care for the society of witty women is because of their own egotism. They want to be *it*. A wise woman sitting down to talk beside such a man will not try to be witty. She will say, "I suppose you're just as busy as ever!"

All men, you see, have the idea that they are always busy, and if they are not, a woman can soon persuade them that they are. Just say, "I don't see how you do it all," without saying what all is.

Another very good opening for women sufficiently self-possessed is to say, "Well, I hear you are to be congratulated again!" You see there is always something; either the office staff gave him a stick last month, or the Rotary Club elected him an Elder Brother. He'll find something. If he doesn't, then say to him that if he hasn't heard of it yet, you are certainly not going to tell. Then don't see him for a month, till the Fireman's Benevolent Union has elected him an Honorary Ash Can. He'll get something if you wait.

So you see there are ever so many ways for women to make a hit without trying to be witty.

Nor have women, themselves, any particular use for witty men. Instinctively they admire courage, though unhappily courage often goes with brutality and savagery. In the next degree they admire the

courage of character of strong people on whom one can rely. But intellect comes last. Unhappily, women also have their superficial admirations, things they *fall for*—it's too bad, but they do. Women are apt to fall for a poet, for anything with long hair and a reputation. Round him they cluster, searching his thoughts. He probably hasn't got any. But wit, in all the procession, comes last, with only a cap and bells behind it.

Another thing is this. By this very restriction of their province of humour, women are saved from some of the silly stuff that affects the conversation of men. Take puns. They have pretty well died out now. The last of the punsters is probably dead, or in hiding. But many of us can still remember the social nuisance of the inveterate punster. This man followed conversation as a shark follows a ship, or, to shift the simile, he was like Jack Horner and stuck in his thumb to pull out a pun. Women never make puns; never did; they think them silly. Perhaps they can't make them—I hope not.

Nor have women that unhappy passion for repeating funny stories in order to make a hit, which becomes a sort of mental obsession with many men. The "funny story" is a queer thing in our American life. I think it must have begun on the porch of the Kentucky store where they whittled sticks all day. At any rate, it has become a kind of institution. It is now a convention that all speakers at banquets must begin with a funny story. I am quite sure that if the Archbishop of Canterbury were invited to address the Episcopal Church of America, the senior bishop would introduce him with a story about an old darky, and the Archbishop would rise to reply with a story about a commercial traveller. These stories run riot in our social life and often turn what might be a pleasant dinner into an agonized competition, punctuated with ruminating silence. Women keep away from this. They like talk about people, preferably about themselves, or else about their children, with their husband as a poor third, and Winston Churchill competing with Mrs. Chiang Kai-shek for fourth place. It may not be funny but it's better than darkies and commercial travellers. . . .

There is also the most obvious qualification to be made in regard to women's sense of humour in general and women's wit in particular, that of course individual exceptions, however conspicuous, do

not set aside the general rule. There is no doubt that at least one of the most brilliant humourists of the hour in America is a woman. Many would say, *the* most brilliant. Such a faculty for reproducing by simple transcription the humour of social dialogue has, it seems to me, never been surpassed. But one swallow doesn't make a summer, though one drop of ink may make all humour kin.

The truth is that the ideal of ordinary men is not a witty woman, but *a sweet woman*. I know how dangerous the term is, how easily derided. Sweetness may easily cloy into sugariness, or evaporate into saintliness. A saint with hair parted in the middle, with eyes uplifted, may be all right for looking out from the golden bars of heaven, but not so good for the cocktail bars below.

And yet, I don't know. A saint can kick in sideways anywhere.

It might easily be objected that all such opinions about sweetness in women are just left-over Victorianism, half a century out of date. Witty women, it will be said, may have seemed out of date in the stodgy days of women's servitude, but not now. The men and women of to-day—or call them the boys and girls—mix on an entirely different plane. All the old hoodoos and taboos are gone. All the girls smoke. They use language just as bad as any the men care to use. They drink cocktails and give the weaker men the cherry. In other words, they can curse and swear and drink—they're real comrades. In point of physique, they may not be equal to the men but after all they can drive a car and fly a plane and telemark all over hell on skis—what more do you want?

So why shouldn't a girl of that type, the new girl who has conquered the world, be witty if she wants to? To which I answer, "No, no, it's just an illusion!" There are no new girls, no new women. Your grandmother was a devil of a clip half a century before you were born. You telemark on skis; she cut ice in a cutter. You only knew her when she was wrinkled and hobbling, reading the Epistle to the Thessalonians in a lace cap and saying she didn't know what the world was coming to. The young have always been young, and the old always old . . . men and women don't change. It took thousands, uncounted thousands, of years to make them what they are. The changes that you think you see lie just on the surface. You could wash them away with soap and hot water.

But now I'll tell you another thing. All this new era of ours of



emancipated women, and women in offices and women the same as men, is just a passing phase, and the end of it is already in sight. A great social disaster fell on the world. The industrial age built up great cities where people lived, crowded into little boxes, where there was no room for children, where women's work vanished because they were dispossessed, where national population was kept going by additions from God knows where, and national safety was jeopardized by the increasing scarcity of our own people. . . . We had a close shave of it.

Then came the war in the air. . . . It has bombed the industrial city out of future existence. They know that already in England. The bomb is decentralizing industry, spreading the population out. They will never go back. This will mean different kinds of homes, homes half-town, half-country, with every man his acre. . . . Every one's dream for a little place in the country, a place to call one's own, will come true. Socialized up to the neck, the individual will have its own again under his feet.

And the children? There must be four or five for every marriage. It is the only path of national safety, safety by the strength and power of our kin and kind, bred in our common thought and speech and ideal. Without our own children, the wave of outside brutes from an unredeemed world will kill us all. Later, we can redeem the world but we must save ourselves first. . . . Everybody will know that. In re-organized society the nation's children will be the first need, the main expense of government. Women who see to that need see to nothing else. . . . That will be done in the home, for there will be no paid domestic service except contract labour by the hour from the outside, labour as good as ladyship, wearing a gold wrist watch and a domestic college degree. . . . But the main thing will be the home and behind it the long garden and trim grass and flower and vegetable beds, and father trying to plant a cherry tree from a book.

When England has been bombed into the country, America will follow. Our cities will go, too. . . . No one will *live* in New York any more than miners live in a coal mine.

So the world will be all different. One little century will do it. Even half a century will show the full outline of it. Surviving on . . . surviving on into this altered world will be the queerest old

set of left-over creatures, as queer as our left-over Victorians, only queerer. These old women will be happy and alert and self-assertive, but they will still not know how to fry an egg or repeat a nursery rhyme, for they only had three-quarters of a child each. . . . The boys and girls of twenty will think them very funny. . . . But my! Won't they be witty when they get together and cackle!

So that, you see, is why I don't think witty women are attractive to men. You don't see the connection? Well, perhaps you remember Molière's play called *The Doctor by Accident* (*Le Médecin Malgré Lui*) where the supposed doctor, called in to diagnose a case, gets off a vast rigmarole about nothing in particular and adds at the end, ". . . and that is why your daughter has lost her speech." You see, he didn't know anything about it.

Possibly it was like that.

## OLD JUNK AND NEW MONEY

I WENT the other day into the beautiful home of my two good friends, the Hespeler-Hyphen-Joneses, and I paused a moment, as my eye fell on the tall clock that stood in the hall.

"Ah," said Hespeler-Hyphen-Jones, "I see you are looking at the clock—a beautiful thing, isn't it?—a genuine antique."

"Does it go?" I asked.

"Good gracious, no!" exclaimed my two friends. "But isn't it a beautiful thing!"

"Did it ever go?"

"I doubt it," said Hespeler-Hyphen-Jones. "The works, of course, are by Salvolatile—one of the really *great* clockmakers, you know. But I don't know whether the works ever went. That, I believe, is one way in which you can always tell a Salvolatile. If it's a genuine Salvolatile, it won't go."

"In any case," I said, "it has no hands."

"Oh, dear, no," said Mrs. Jones. "It never had, as far as we know. We picked it up in such a queer little shop in Amalfi and the man assured us that it never had had any hands. He guaranteed it. That's one of the things, you know, that you can tell by. Charles and I were terribly keen about clocks at that time and really studied them, and the books all agreed that no genuine Salvolatile has any hands."

"And was the side broken, too, when you got it?" I asked.

"Ah, no," said my friend. "We had that done by an expert in New York after we got back. Isn't it exquisitely done? You see, he has made the break to look exactly as if some one had rolled the clock over and stamped on it. Every genuine Salvolatile is said to have been stamped upon like that."

"Of course, our break is only imitation, but it's extremely well done, isn't it? We go to Ferrugi's, that little place on Fourth Avenue, you know, for everything that we want broken. They have a splendid man there. He can break anything."

"Really!" I said.

"Yes, and the day when we wanted the clock done, Charles and I went down to see him do it. It was really quite wonderful, wasn't it, Charles?"

"Yes, indeed. The man laid the clock on the floor and turned it on its side and then stood looking at it intently, and walking round and round it and murmuring in Italian as if he were swearing at it. Then he jumped in the air and came down on it with both feet."

"Did he?" I asked.

"Yes, and with such wonderful accuracy. Our friend Mr. Appin-Hyphen-Smith—the great expert, you know—was looking at our clock last week and he said it was marvellous, hardly to be distinguished from a genuine *fractura*."

"But he did say, didn't he, dear," said Mrs. Jones, "that the better way is to throw a clock out of a fourth-story window? You see, that was the height of the Italian houses in the Thirteenth Century—is it the Thirteenth Century I mean, Charles?"

"Yes," said Charles.

"Do you know, the other day I made the silliest mistake about a spoon. I thought it was a Twelfth Century spoon and said so and in reality it was only Eleven and a half. Wasn't it, Charles?"

"Yes," said Charles.

"But do come into the drawing-room and have some tea. And, by the way, since you are interested in antiques, do look please at my teapot."

"It looks an excellent teapot," I said, feeling it with my hand, "and it must have been very expensive, wasn't it?"

"Oh, not *that* one," interposed Mr. Hespeler-Hyphen-Jones. "That is nothing. We got that here in New York at Hoffany's—to make tea in. It is made of solid silver, of course, and all that, but even Hoffany's admitted that it was made in America and was probably not more than a year or so old and had never been used by anybody else. In fact, they couldn't guarantee it in any way."

"Oh, I see," I said.

"But let me pour you out tea from it and then do look at the perfect darling beside it. Oh, don't touch it, please, it won't stand up."

"Won't stand up?" I said.

"No," said Hespeler-Jones, "that's one of the tests. We know from that it is genuine Swaatsmaacher. None of them stand up."

"Where did you buy it," I asked, "here?"

"Oh, heavens, no, you couldn't buy a thing like that here! As a matter of fact, we picked it up in a little gin shop in Obheollandam in Holland. Do you know Obheollandam?"

"I don't," I said.

"It's just the dearest little place, nothing but little wee smelly shops filled with most delightful things—all antique, everything broken. They guarantee that there is nothing in the shop that wasn't smashed at least a hundred years ago."

"You don't use the teapot to make tea," I said.

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Hespeler-Jones as she handed me a cup of tea from the New York teapot. "I don't think you could. It leaks."

"That again is a thing," said her husband, "that the experts always look for in a Swaatsmaacher. If it doesn't leak, it's probably just a faked-up thing not twenty years old."

"Is it silver?" I asked.

"Ah, no. That's another test," said Mrs. Jones. "The real Swaatsmaachers were always made of pewter bound with barrel-iron off the gin barrels. They try to imitate it now by using silver, but they can't get it."

"No, the silver won't take the tarnish," interjected her husband. "You see, it's the same way with ever so many of the old things. They rust and rot in a way that you simply cannot imitate. I have an old drinking horn that I'll show you presently—Ninth Century, isn't it, dear?—that is all coated inside with the most beautiful green slime, absolutely impossible to reproduce."

"Is it?" I said.

"Yes, I took it to Squeeziou's, the Italian place in London. (They are the great experts on horns, you know; they can tell exactly the century and the breed of cow.) And they told me that they had tried in vain to reproduce that peculiar and beautiful rot. One of their head men said that he thought that this horn had probably been taken from a dead cow that had been buried for fifty years. That's what gives it its value, you know."

"You didn't buy it in London, did you?" I asked.

"Oh, no," answered Hespeler-Jones. "London is perfectly impos-



sible—just as hopeless as New York. You can't buy anything real there at all."

"Then where do you get all your things?" I asked, as I looked round at the collection of junk in the room.

"Oh, we pick them up here and there," said Mrs. Jones. "Just in any out-of-the-way corners. That little stool we found at the back of a cow stable in Loch Aberlocherty. They were actually using it for milking. And the two others—aren't they beautiful? though really it's quite wrong to have two chairs alike in the same room—came from the back of a tiny little whisky shop in Galway. Such a delight of an old Irishman sold them to us and he admitted that he himself had no idea how old they were. They might, he said, be Fifteenth Century, or they might not.

"But, oh, Charles," my hostess interrupted herself to say, "I've just had a letter from Jane (Jane is my sister, you know) that is terribly exciting. She's found a table at a tiny place in Brittany that she thinks would exactly do in our card room. She says that it is utterly unlike anything else in the room and has quite obviously no connection with cards. But let me read what she says—let me see, yes, here's where it begins:

"... a perfectly sweet little table. It probably had four legs originally and even now has two which, I am told, is a great find, as most people have to be content with one. The man explained that it could either be leaned up against the wall or else suspended from the ceiling on a silver chain. One of the boards of the top is gone, but I am told that that is of no consequence, as all the best specimens of Brittany tables have at least one board out.'

"Doesn't that sound fascinating, Charles? Do send Jane a cable at once not to miss it."

And when I took my leave a little later, I realized once and for all that the antique business is not for me.

## THE ERRORS OF SANTA CLAUS

**I**T was Christmas Eve.

The Browns, who lived in the adjoining house, had been dining with the Joneses.

Brown and Jones were sitting over wine and walnuts at the table. The others had gone upstairs.

"What are you giving to your boy for Christmas?" asked Brown.

"A train," said Jones, "new kind of thing—automatic."

"Let's have a look at it," said Brown.

Jones fetched a parcel from the sideboard and began unwrapping it.

"Ingenious thing, isn't it?" he said, "goes on its own rails. Queer how kids love to play with trains, isn't it?"

"Yes," assented Brown, "how are the rails fixed?"

"Wait, I'll show you," said Jones, "just help me to shove these dinner things aside and roll back the cloth. There! See! You lay the rails like that and fasten them at the ends, so—"

"Oh, yes, I catch on, makes a grade, doesn't it? Just the thing to amuse a child, isn't it? I got Willie a toy aeroplane."

"I know, they're great. I got Edwin one on his birthday. But I thought I'd get him a train this time. I told him Santa Claus was going to bring him something altogether new this time. Edwin, of course, believes in Santa Claus absolutely. Say, look at this locomotive, would you? It has a spring coiled up inside the fire box."

"Wind her up," said Brown with great interest, "let's see her go."

"All right," said Jones, "just pile up two or three plates or something to lean the end of the rails on. There, notice the way it buzzes before it starts. Isn't that a great thing for a kid, eh?"

"Yes," said Brown, "and say! see this little string to pull the whistle. By Gad, it toots, eh? Just like real?"

"Now then, Brown," Jones went on, "you hitch on those cars and I'll start her. I'll be engineer, eh!"

Half an hour later Brown and Jones were still playing trains on the dining-room table.

But their wives upstairs in the drawing room hardly noticed their absence. They were too much interested.

"Oh, I think it's perfectly sweet," said Mrs. Brown, "just the loveliest doll I've seen in years. I must get one like it for Ulvina. Won't Clarisse be perfectly enchanted?"

"Yes," answered Mrs. Jones, "and then she'll have all the fun of arranging the dresses. Children love that so much. Look! there are three little dresses with the doll, aren't they cute? All cut out and ready to stitch together."

"Oh, how perfectly lovely," exclaimed Mrs. Brown, "I think the mauve one would suit the doll best—don't you?—with such golden hair—only don't you think it would make it much nicer to turn back the collar, so, and to put a little band—so?"

"What a good ideal!" said Mrs. Jones, "do let's try it. Just wait, I'll get a needle in a minute. I'll tell Clarisse that Santa Claus sewed it himself. The child believes in Santa Claus absolutely."

And half an hour later Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Brown were so busy stitching dolls' clothes that they could not hear the roaring of the little train up and down the dining table, and had no idea what the four children were doing.

Nor did the children miss their mothers.

"Dandy, aren't they?" Edwin Jones was saying to little Willie Brown, as they sat in Edwin's bedroom. "A hundred in a box, with cork tips, and see, an amber mouthpiece that fits into a little case at the side. Good present for dad, eh?"

"Fine!" said Willie, appreciatively. "I'm giving father cigars."

"I know, I thought of cigars too. Men always like cigars and cigarettes. You can't go wrong on them. Say, would you like to try one or two of these cigarettes? We can take them from the bottom. You'll like them, they're Russian—away ahead of Egyptian."

"Thanks," answered Willie. "I'd like one immensely. I only started smoking last spring—on my twelfth birthday. I think a fel-

ler's a fool to begin smoking cigarettes too soon, don't you? It stunts him. I waited till I was twelve."

"Me too," said Edwin, as they lighted their cigarettes. "In fact, I wouldn't buy them now if it weren't for dad. I simply *had* to give him something from Santa Claus. He believes in Santa Claus absolutely, you know."

And while this was going on, Clarisse was showing little Ulvina the absolutely lovely little bridge set that she got for her mother. "Aren't these markers perfectly charming?" said Ulvina, "and don't you love this little Dutch design—or is it Flemish, darling?"

"Dutch," said Clarisse, "isn't it quaint? And aren't these the dearest little things—for putting the money in when you play. I needn't have got them with it—they'd have sold the rest separately—but I think it's too utterly slow playing without money, don't you?"

"Oh, abominable," shuddered Ulvina, "but your mamma never plays for money, does she?"

"Mamma! Oh, gracious, no. Mamma's far too slow for that. But I shall tell her that Santa Claus insisted on putting in the little money boxes."

"I suppose she believes in Santa Claus, just as my Mamma does."

"Oh, absolutely," said Clarisse, and added, "What if we play a little game! With a double dummy, the French way, or Norwegian Skat, if you like. That only needs two."

"All right," agreed Ulvina, and in a few minutes they were deep in a game of cards with a little pile of pocket money beside them.

About half an hour later, all the members of the two families were down again in the drawing room. But of course nobody said anything about the presents. In any case they were all too busy looking at the beautiful big Bible, with maps in it, that the Joneses had bought to give to Grandfather. They all agreed that with the help of it, Grandfather could hunt up any place in Palestine in a moment, day or night.

But upstairs, away upstairs in a sitting room of his own, Grandfather Jones was looking with an affectionate eye at the presents that stood beside him. There was a beautiful whisky decanter, with

silver filigree outside (and whisky inside) for Jones, and for the little boy a big nickel-plated Jew's harp.

Later on, far in the night, the person, or the influence, or whatever it is called Santa Claus, took all the presents and placed them in the people's stockings.

And, being blind as he always has been, he gave the wrong things to the wrong people—in fact, he gave them just as indicated above.

But the next day, in the course of Christmas morning, the situation straightened itself out, just as it always does.

Indeed, by ten o'clock, Brown and Jones were playing with the train, and Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Jones were making dolls' clothes, and the boys were smoking cigarettes, and Clarisse and Ulvina were playing cards for their pocket money.

And upstairs—away up—Grandfather was drinking whisky and playing the Jew's harp.

And so Christmas, just as it always does, turned out all right after all.



# THE DOCTOR AND THE CONTRAPTION

## I

### MEDICINE AS IT WAS

I SUPPOSE that when an up-to-date doctor of to-day looks at you or me, or at any one of us, he sees something very different from what we see. In place of a human personality—a soul looking out from the infinite depth of the human eye—he sees a collection of tubes, feed-pipes, conduits, joints, levers, and food and water tanks. He sees thirty-five feet of internal elastic piping, a hundred and ten feet of wiring, together with a pound and a half of brain, arrayed behind a couple of optical lenses set in gimbals. In other words, what he sees is not a man at all but a complicated machine contraption, probably running very badly, wheezing in the pipes and clogged in the carburetor. Naturally he wants to get at it, just as a garage man longs to tear a motor to pieces. He would like to take a monkey-wrench and tighten up its joints; turn a hose into it and flush out its piping; or better still, put a new boiler into it and throw the old one away.

This is what is called the Medical Instinct. There is something fierce, as it were, to the verge of comicality in what a doctor would like to do to a patient short of driving shingle nails into him with a tack hammer. Even that might come in handy.

But contrast the change there has been in the common practice of medicine within a couple of generations. Compare the medicine of fifty years ago with the medicine of to-day and we can easily foresee the further progress of the science.

Thus, first:

MEDICINE YEAR, 1880

*The Saviour of Men*

In the old-fashioned days when a man got sick he went to a family doctor and said he was sick. The doctor gave him a bottle of medicine. He took it home and drank it and got well.

On the bottle was written, "Three times a day, in water." The man drank it three times a day the first day, twice the second day, and once the third day. On the fourth day he forgot it. But that didn't matter. He was well by that time.

The place where he visited the doctor was the doctor's own house, in the room called the "surgery" which was the same room as the one where they played euchre in the evening. There was no apparatus in it, except fishing rods and shotguns.

The doctor mixed the medicine himself at the tap over the sink. He put in anything that he had—it didn't matter much what. As a matter of fact the man began to feel better as soon as he saw the medicine being mixed.

The doctor didn't take an X-ray of the patient. He couldn't. There weren't any. He didn't test his blood pressure or examine his arteries; people had none then.

Very often after the patient had gone away the doctor, if he was a thoughtful man, would sit and smoke a pipe and wonder what was wrong with the man anyway. But he never, never expressed any such wonder or doubt to the man himself. His profession had learned this maxim from Hippocrates and it had come down as an unbroken tradition. The medical profession never talked medicine to the patient.

Sometimes the doctor suspected that the man was really ill. But he never said so. Only after the patient was quite well again, did the doctor tell him how ill he had been. Hence every illness appeared in retrospect as a close shave in which a timely dose of medicine had saved a human life. This raised the whole tone of the business. The doctor appeared as a saviour of men. As he got older his beard—all doctors wore beards—became tinged with grey; his person acquired an easy dignity; his expression, something of nobility. He cured the

patient by his presence. Beyond that, all he needed was a bottle of medicine and a cork. In an extreme case, he sat beside the patient's bed in a long vigil that might last all night. But the patient was well in the morning.

For convalescence the doctor prescribed a "light diet." This meant beefsteak and porter.

Such medicine, of course, was hopelessly unscientific, hopelessly limited. Death could beat it round every corner. But it was human, gracious, kindly. To-day it is replaced by "machine medicine" with the mechanical test, the scientific diagnosis, the hospital, the X-ray. All this is marvellous. But no one has yet combined it with the Art of Healing.

As witness:

## II

### MEDICINE YEAR, 1932

#### THE DOCTOR AND THE CONTRAPTION

The Contraption sits huddled up in its serge suit in a consultation office chair. Its locomotive apparatus is doubled up beneath it, folded at the joints. The thing is anxious, but the doctor doesn't know that. The poor Contraption is consumed with something like panic that is gripping it by the feed-pipe. But it makes as brave a show as it can.

"It's a little hard to say," says the doctor, "just what the trouble is."

He has been making a few preliminary investigations by punching and listening in.

"I don't know that I quite like that heart," he adds, and then relapses into a reflective silence.

"Yes," he continues, as he comes out of his reverie, "there are symptoms there that I don't like—don't like at all."

Neither does the Contraption, but he keeps quiet.

"There may be," says the doctor, "an ankylosis there."

What an ankylosis is and what it does, the Contraption doesn't

know. But the sound of it is quite enough.

"It's just possible," says the doctor as another bright idea occurs to him, "that there's an infiltration into the proscenium."

These may not be the exact medical terms that the doctor uses. But that is what they sound like to the Contraption.

"Is that so?" he says.

"However, we'll keep that under observation till we see what we find. You say you never had hydrophobia?"

"Not so far as I remember."

"That's interesting. The symptoms seem to suggest hydrophobia, or just possibly hendiadys."

The doctor reflects a little more, then he begins to write on little bits of paper.

"Well," he says in a cheerful tone, "we'll try it out anyway."

He writes out little orders for X-rays, blood tests, heart tests.

"Now," he says in conclusion. "Don't be alarmed. You may blow up on the street. But I don't think so. I'm not much afraid of that. It's possible that your brain will burst open at the sides. But I'm not alarmed if it does. If your eyes fall out on the street, let me know."

These are not his exact words. But they give exactly the impression that his words convey.

"I will," says the Contraption.

"And now," says the doctor, who by this time has warmed up to the case and is filled with artistic interest, "about diet—I think you'd better not eat anything—or not for a month or so; and don't drink; and you may as well cut out tobacco, and you'd better not sleep.

"And above all," concludes the doctor with a sudden burst of geniality that he had forgotten to use sooner, "don't worry. You may blow up at any time, but don't let that worry you. You may fall dead in a taxi, but I'm not alarmed if you do. Come back in a week and I'll show you the X-ray plates. Good-bye."

The Contraption goes away for a week. That means seven days, or 168 hours, or 10,080 minutes, or 604,800 seconds. And he knows every one of them. He feels them go by.

When he comes back in a week he finds the doctor beaming with interest.

"Look at them," he says, holding up to the light some photographic plates.

"What are those?" asks the Contraption.

"The brain," says the doctor. "You see that misty-looking spot—there, just between the encephalon and the encyclopaedia—?"

"What is it?" asks the Contraption.

"I don't know yet," the doctor says. "It's a little early to say. But we'll watch it. If you don't mind, I think we'll probably open your head and take a look. They are doing some wonderful things now in the removal of the brain. It's rather a nice operation, but I think I may take the risk. I'll let you know. Meantime you're following out our instructions, I hope, not eating anything."

"Oh, no."

"And nothing to drink or smoke."

"Oh, no."

"That's right. Well, now, in a day or two we'll know more. I'll have your blood by that time and the sections of your heart and then I think we'll begin to see where we are. Good-bye."

. . . . .

A week or so later the doctor says to his lady secretary, "That Contraption in the serge suit, wasn't he to have come in this morning?"

The lady looked over a memorandum book. "Yes, I think he was."

"Well, call him up on the 'phone. He doesn't need to come. I've had all his hospital reports and they can't find anything wrong at all. Tell him they want him to come back in six months and they may find something then. But there's absolutely nothing wrong with him now, unless it's his imagination. And, oh, by the way, tell him this—it will amuse him. That cloud on the X-ray plate that looked like a clot on the brain turns out to be a flaw in the glass. He'll have a good laugh at that."

The secretary vanishes into the telephone room and it is some little time before she comes back.

"Well?" says the doctor, "did you get that gentleman on the 'phone?" He calls him a gentleman now because medical interest in him is over.

"I got his house," she answers, "but they say the gentleman is dead. He died last night."



"Dear me!" says the doctor gravely. "So we were wrong after all; we should have tested for something else. Did they say anything about how he died?"

"Yes. They say that as far as they know he died from gas. He seems to have turned on gas in the bedroom on purpose."

"Tut, tut," says the doctor, "suicidal mania! I forgot to test him for it!"

### III

#### THE WALRUS AND THE CARPENTER

But, still humanity gets used to anything and thrives on it. Already this new method of medicine, this tinkering, testing, inoculating, is a recognized part of our common life. Already we can see developing in it the healing art of the future; or rather, not the healing art which is a thing lost in the past and surviving only by the wayside. What is replacing it, is better called the art of reconstruction. Its aim is not to heal the patient; he's not worth it; reconstruct him; make him over. If his engine doesn't work, put a new one in him. Every one to-day knows in a general sort of way something of what is being done in reconstructive surgery. Bones are taken out and new ones put in. Patches of skin from Mr. Jones are grafted on to Mr. Smith. No one cares to think out too completely the gruesome details or to ask where they are leading. But the goal is plain enough. And no doubt when it is reached all idea of gruesomeness will have vanished from it. Ideas of that sort are only secondary and relative, things with no basis in absolute reality. An octopus looks terrible; a cooked lobster looks delicious. If no one had ever seen a cooked lobster, a whole supper party would rise, shrieking with terror at the sight of one.

Thus it would seem probable that with the triumphant progress of reconstructive surgery, all sense of terror or gruesomeness will pass away. We are quite used to people with false teeth; we are getting used to people with lifted faces; and presently we shall not shrink in alarm from a friend who has just bought a brand new stomach.

In witness of which:

MEDICINE YEAR, 2000

*The Walrus and the Carpenter*

"Now, I'd like to have him pretty well made over from the start," said the self-assertive lady to the doctor.

As she said it she indicated a miserable-looking creature, evidently her husband, sitting flopped in a chair, gazing feebly at his wife and at the doctor.

The woman was of that voluble, obtrusive, assertive type that has made the two sexes what they are.

The man was of the familiar pattern of the henpecked husband, with a face as meek in expression as the countenance of a walrus, and with the ragged drooping moustache that belongs with it.

"Oh, I don't know about that," he murmured.

But neither the lady nor the doctor paid much attention to what he murmured.

"He needs nearly everything new," said the woman, "and I've been telling him I'm going to give it to him as a present for our wedding anniversary next month. It will be twenty-five years we've been married."

"Twenty-five years!" said the doctor.

"Of course," gurgled the lady. "I was just a mere girl when we got married. They used to call me the little Rose Bud!"

"Yes, yes," murmured the doctor. He was looking at the lady in an absent-minded way, not really seeing her. Perhaps he was thinking that no lapse of time, no passage of generations can alter this type of woman or vary this line of conversation. On the other hand, perhaps he wasn't. He may have been merely thinking of the case. It was not every day that Dr. Carpenter was called upon to do what was called in his profession "a complete job." To put in a new bone or two or insert part of a brain or to replace an old stomach was an everyday matter. But to make a subject over from head to toe was still unusual and perhaps a trifle experimental.

"As a matter of fact," the husband began again, "I'm not so sure that I really need so very much done; in fact so far as I am concerned—"

"Now, John," interposed his wife, "don't let me hear any more of that. This is my business and not yours. I'm going to pay for it all out of my own money, and you're not to say another word."

The doctor was looking meditatively at the patient. He seemed to be measuring him with his eye. "There's a lot of him that I can use," he said.

"How do you mean?" asked the lady.

"Well, for instance, his head. That's all right. I can use his head as it is."

"Not his face!" said the lady.

"Yes, even his face, in a way. You'd be surprised what can be done without any radical replacement of tissue. What his face needs is not any change, but more animation, more expression, more alertness. You wait till I've put about twenty thousand volts of electricity through it, and see how it looks then."

"I say," murmured the man, "I'm not so sure that I feel so very keen about that."

"You won't know it," said the doctor tersely, and then continuing, "and I don't see why I couldn't use his framework. The arms and legs are all right."

The woman shook her head.

"He's not tall enough," she said.

"Personally," began the man, but his wife paid no attention to him and went on.

"He needs *presence*. He makes such a poor appearance when we go out evenings. I'd like him quite a lot taller."

"Very good," said Dr. Carpenter. "It's easily done. I can put in another six inches in the thigh bone simply enough. He'll look a little short when he sits at table but that won't matter so much. But of course to get the right proportion you'll need to alter the arms as well. By the way," he added as a new idea seemed to occur to him, "do you play golf?"

"Do I play?" said the patient, showing for the first time an obvious animation. "Do I do anything else? I play every day, and yet would you believe it, I'm about the worst player in the club. Take yesterday, for instance, I'd come down the long hole, four hundred and eighty yards in three—right on to the green, and there I stuck—seven more to get into the hole. Seven! Can you beat it?"

"I'll tell you," said the doctor. "If you feel that way about it, I might do something about your golf while I am altering your arm."

"Say, if you could, I'd pay a thousand dollars for that," said the man. "Do you think you can?"

"Wait a bit," said the doctor. He stepped into the adjacent telephone cupboard. What he said and what was said to him were not audible to either Mr. Walrus or to his wife. The detailed operations of the medical profession are not either now or in Utopia as noble to contemplate as its final achievements. But if there had been an ear to listen when the dial was turned, this is what it would have heard.

"It's Dr. Carpenter. What about that Scotch professional golfer that you got yesterday? Is he all gone?"

"Wait a minute, doctor, I'll ask. . . . No, they say nothing much gone yet. Do you want his brain?"

The doctor laughed. "No, thanks. I want his right forearm. I've a client who'll pay anything that's fair up to a thousand. Right. Thank you."

"That'll be all right," said the doctor. "I can put a golf adjuster in you; and so now I think we can go right ahead, eh?"

"There's just one thing," said the wife, "that I'd like changed more than anything else. John is always so retiring and shy. He don't make the most of himself."

"Oh, come, come, June!" protested the man bluntly, "there's nothing in me to make much of."

"Well, I think," the woman went on, "that John's got what they call an 'inferiority complex.' Isn't that the word? Now couldn't you do something to his brain to get that out of it?"

Dr. Carpenter smiled.

"That's not in his brain, Mrs. Walrus; that's a matter of his glands and there's nothing easier than to alter that. The adjustment is a little difficult, the only danger is that he may get a little the other way."

"That's all right," said the woman, "that won't hurt him. He needs it."

. . . . .  
It would be grossly out of place to linger on the details of the weeks of "treatment" which followed for Mr. Walrus. Such things



belong only in a book of technical medicine. Even nowadays we prefer to leave all that in a half light, and in future generations, convention will dictate a still greater reticence in regard to the processes of reconstructive surgery. In any case the use of *sustained* anaesthetics in place of the intermittent anaesthetics of to-day put a different complexion on the whole affair. Convalescence itself being under anaesthetics, the patient—or rather client, to use the more ordinary term—knows nothing from his entrance into the Refractorium (formerly called hospital) until his final exit. The declaration of such a client that he “felt a new man” had a more literal meaning than now.

Suffice it to say that within a week or so Mrs. Walrus received a telephone communication from the hospital which said, “His legs are done.” A little after that came an inquiry, “How about his whiskers? Would you like to preserve them or will you have a permanent clean shave?”

Under such circumstances, Dr. Carpenter was not at all surprised when in about six weeks from the original interview the renovated John Walrus walked into his office. He was all the less surprised because of the fact that Mr. Walrus was practically unrecognizable as his former self. What the doctor saw now was a tall man whose erect bearing was almost a perpendicular line and whose clean-shaven face, hard square jaw (evidently brand new) proclaimed a man of character and determination.

“Mr. Walrus!” exclaimed Dr. Carpenter when at last he realized who it was.

“I am,” said the man, shaking hands with a cordial but firm clasp, “though it’s a measly sort of name and I don’t like it.”

“And how do you feel?” asked the doctor.

“Fine,” said Walrus. “I’ve just been out on the links. I went right up there first thing as soon as I came out. Do you know, I went round under forty; and that long hole I did in four—can you believe it?—one under the par. Certainly the rest and the treatment have done wonders for my arm.”

“Certainly,” repeated the doctor.

“Though as a matter of fact,” Walrus continued, “I think I’ve a natural aptitude for the game. After all, you know, brain counts in golf as well as brawn. But, however, that’s not what I came to talk



about but just to thank you and to ask you to be good enough to have your account sent to me—to me personally, you understand.”

“But I thought,” said Dr. Carpenter, “that Mrs. Walrus wanted to pay it herself?”

“Nothing doing,” laughed the client. “I’m not such a fool as that. If she paid it, it would create a sort of lien, don’t you see, legally?”

“Oh, I know that,” said the doctor. “The case often occurs. Still, in your instance I should have thought—”

“There’s more to it than that,” said Walrus, pausing to light a cigarette. “I went up to the house and saw her. My heavens, Carpenter, what a tongue that woman has! Absolutely never stops! The fact is, I don’t think I care to go back to her. She’d talk me to death.”

“As far as that goes,” said the doctor, “if it was only a matter of her tongue, I could shorten it for you.”

“You could, eh?” For a moment Mr. Walrus paused as if in some slight doubt. Then he went on speaking in the firm decisive way that was now, since twenty-four hours, habitual with him.

“No, no, it’s too late now. And anyway, I don’t want to. The fact is, Carpenter, that I have arranged to take a new wife. I’ve decided, in short, to take one of the nurses from up at the hospital. You may have noticed her when you were up there, the dark, very tall one. In fact, if anything, she’s a little too tall.”

“I could shorten her,” murmured Carpenter.

“By how much?” asked Walrus—“Or no, I’ll keep her as she is.”

“And when do you get married?” asked the doctor.

“I haven’t quite decided,” replied Walrus. “Very soon, I think.”

“No doubt,” said the doctor, “the young lady is equally keen on it?”

“I haven’t asked her yet,” said Walrus. “I shall probably mention it to her to-day. But I want to go and have another eighteen holes first. Well, good-bye, doctor, don’t forget the account, and by the way, when you make it out to me kindly alter the name. After this I’m changing my name from John Walrus to Hercules Bullrush.”

After the client had gone out, Dr. Carpenter, who was a thoughtful man, sat down at his desk and continued his work upon his forthcoming treatise, “On the Probable Limitations of Restorative Surgery.”

## THE DISSOLUTION OF OUR DINNER CLUB

AS it is now definitely understood that our dinner club is dissolved, it is proper to let people know the circumstances of its dissolution. This all the more so, as already I begin to hear it mentioned with a sort of regret as "the old dinner club," although the last meeting—the one of the Hungarian Goulash—was only on Tuesday of last week. I remember that it was Tuesday because I was a little laid up on the Wednesday.

Yet, in a way, it is only right to regret the ending of the club, as I never knew of anything that started off with greater enthusiasm, with greater what the French call *éclat*. The idea of it just came up one day in a sort of spontaneous way among a group of us who were sitting around having drinks and talking in our club—I mean the regular city club to which we belong. The talk had been really worth while; Merrill, who is a really brilliant talker, had been speaking, I remember, of Mr. Roosevelt, making an analysis of him—we had three or four drinks while he was making it—and some one said that if you want to have really good conversation the thing is to start a dinner club—you know, a club to meet every fortnight or so, and hold a dinner and have brilliant conversation. This man said he'd once been a member of a club like that over in Edinburgh—he's Scotch; his name is Stewart—Cluny Macpherson Stewart—a Scotchman—and one night they'd discuss (I mean this club in Edinburgh) say, Greek architecture; or another night perhaps the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745; or another night, the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. So hearing all that, we got off to a good start with all of us talking at once.

Of course everybody agreed that, with a dinner club, you have to hold it somewhere else than in your own regular club. That gives a sort of novelty to the evening and lets you take in other fellows

who don't happen to be in your own club. It was agreed that men get stale if they just stick around with their own same crowd in their own same club, whereas a man in a dinner club gets what you might call mental friction.

Then one of the group—a man called Watergrass, a poetical sort of fellow—said that the idea was to have your dinner club meet at some place away out in the suburbs, so that you could have a good bracing three-hour walk before you sat down. He said that a walk like that put a man just in shape for brilliant talk—blows away the cobwebs, that was his phrase—and he said that that season of the year—it was November when we began—was just right for walking. What you needed for real walking was rough weather, the rougher the better, wind and storm so that you could turn up your coat collar, grip your stick and just buffet right into it. He quoted the case of men like Tennyson and Longfellow, tremendous walkers, both of them. It appears that Tennyson—even to write just a small unimportant poem like *Break, break, break*—would walk forty miles as hard as he could go; I think Watergrass said forty. Anyway he said that when Longfellow wrote about how he stood on the bridge at midnight, he actually went and stood on it; that, I gathered, was what gave him the idea of standing on it.

Well, of course, that part of the plan was instantly and eagerly adopted. All the more so as one of the men was able to tell us of a new eating place that had just been opened right outside city limits, ten miles away, an awfully artistic place called THE OLD COW-STABLE. You see, it actually had been an old cow-stable—I mean it really was one before—with heavy stone walls and a high peaked roof—and it had been done over inside and opened up as a sort of roadside restaurant, and somebody had hit on the clever idea of calling it THE OLD COW-STABLE. Clever, wasn't it?

But the biggest idea of all, the thing that gave the club its real impetus, was the idea of having the bill of fare for the dinner utterly different each time, and represent different kinds of national dinners. For instance, it was suggested right away that we could have a typical "New England Dinner"—the thing the early settlers used to have, at the time when they had only one big pot over the fire to cook in and put everything in together; or, as some one called it, a real old-fashioned New England dinner. Then Des Rois, who is

French, said why not have a typical Marseilles dinner like what they eat in Marseilles: and he told us about *Bouilla-baisse*, the great Marseilles dish along with *tripe à la mode de Caen*. He spelt them later for the Committee. We generally spell Caen as Cannes, but anyway it is close to Marseilles. Des Rois certainly got us going by telling about eating *Bouilla-baisse* and drinking the real Marseilles wine *pisco* and then driving out along the Corniche Road overlooking the Mediterranean. He said he would arrange a dinner like that, that would take us right to Marseilles.

Then, of course, there was suggested a Mexican dinner—*chile con carne* with hot *tamales*—and a Bengal dinner with mangoes and curried duck—in fact I can't remember them all—and, of course, the Hungarian Goulash; that I mentioned before; that came last and that we had last Tuesday. I was sick Wednesday.

We limited the club to a membership of twenty—we had to limit it or we'd have had all the city in—and invented for it the happy name of the Dinner Club, to mean that it was just a club for dining. Other names were suggested. One of the crowd, a man called Woodenbean, who lectures in Greek in the Faculty here, wanted to give it a Greek name, *Hoi* something, *Hoi Pants* something. I can't quite get it, but he said it was a delightfully witty name. I am sure it was.

Looking back on the Dinner Club, now that it is all over, upon my word I find it hard to see why it failed—or I won't say failed—I mean came to an end. I am inclined to think that it was a case of hard luck; so many little things went wrong with it. For instance, on the day we began—it was in November—the weather was all wrong. Just one of those quiet clear days with a blue sky, no snow, hardly a breath of wind—nothing to buffet. Some of us had met at the town club at four to walk out with heavy coats and big sticks but it seemed silly to start out like that—still broad daylight in the middle of the afternoon—to hoof it for three hours, when you could go out in a taxi in twenty minutes. So we just sat around the club and had a few drinks and talked—mostly about Mr. Roosevelt—and then went out in a couple of taxis. We found that practically all the other members had come the same way, the weather being no good for walking, but they all had big rough coats on and carried thick heavy sticks, which gave the thing a kind of touch. The only one



who had walked was Watergrass and he looked pretty tuckered out, and fed up with being the only one.

So that was the start, not quite in the right key. And it made things a little worse when one of the members—it was Macpherson Stewart, who hadn't ever seen THE OLD COW-STABLE before—as soon as he came in, said, "Phew!"—like that—"Phew!". Somebody said, "Well, Cluny, you can't expect to cook a New England dinner and not have a certain smell of cooking." And he said, "Oh! It's not the New England dinner! Oh, no, phew!" Of course, the idea was ridiculous. The whole place had been renovated, with a beautiful hardwood floor and an open fireplace. I admit that in the little sort of partitioned-off place in the corner, where we put our hats and coats, you might notice something—but not really anything. And for the matter of that, over in Scotland I've been in places like Edinburgh castle, and Carlyle's cottage that were something awful! Anyway, Macpherson dropped out.

Still I think it was mistaken judgment to begin with a New England dinner. Those old colonial settlers, you've got to remember, were a pretty tough lot, out of doors in the open air all day, and of course they'd never been really used to anything; and they hadn't had four cocktails before they sat down. And I hadn't realized before what it meant, cooking all the stuff in one big pot; it all comes out—meat and cabbage and vegetables and bones—in one great wet *flop*! I thought of stuff I'd read about—Indian dog feasts (that was the same time as the Puritans, wasn't it?)—and I couldn't eat it. That was all about it. I couldn't.

Still I don't mean the evening was so bad. All the twenty members were on hand and there was such a lot of initial enthusiasm it was bound to carry the thing through. Watergrass kept dozing off to sleep from having walked out, and Stewart, of course, was peeved, but on the whole, it went pretty well. The conversation was good, but not quite of the kind that I'd been expecting. There wasn't any architecture or archaeology stuff. We talked mostly about Mr. Roosevelt. Merrill made an analysis of him; it was certainly brilliant—I couldn't follow most of it. But the idea was to show that Roosevelt is a world force and, if I got it right, should have been expected, even if he hadn't turned up. We broke up about ten-thirty, with pretty good feeling all round, and with everybody promising to be



on deck two weeks later for the Marseilles dinner that Des Rois was to arrange.

That, I will admit straight out, was a mistake—that *Bouilla-baisse* stuff. I don't say the Marseilles people don't eat it. They're fishermen and they're in sea air all the time, and in sea air you can eat anything. But *that* stuff! Did you ever see it? And the thing after it called *tripe à la mode de Caen*—it's French and means canned tripe—of all the ghastly looking messes! Taste? I've no notion—I couldn't touch it. One rather dirty thing was that Des Rois didn't eat it. He'd ordered an English mutton chop for himself. I had some cheese, all full of holes, and some figs—but of course I'm not kicking at that—I ate when I got home. The talk, though, was really good. Merrill got to talking of Mr. Roosevelt and made an analysis of him—a new one; it was two weeks since the other one—and that led us to talk of a wide range of things, like the New Deal and Mr. Roosevelt's attitude to the courts and what Mr. Roosevelt would do with "big business"—in fact we ranged all over the place.

One thing, though, bothered us, which we hadn't noticed so much the first night—the seats. You see, they had no backs to them. THE OLD COW-STABLE is all done up artistically with long narrow tables of heavy old wood—the kind the monks used to eat at in the place called—what was it?—the Refractory, or the Penitentiary, or something—anyway, those narrow tables. With tables of that sort the seats have to be just long heavy benches with no backs; anything else would be hopelessly inartistic. But you sit on that thing for two hours and a half and you'll see where you are. With monks it was different; they were looking for it. But we weren't. So that meant we broke up about nine-fifteen; and, as a matter of fact, three or four of the men—I mean apart from Watergrass and Cluny Stewart—hadn't turned up at all.

But the next meeting wasn't so bad. That Mexican stuff, if you only take a little of it, is *good*. A little of that hot Chili-tabasco stuff on a little edge of bread is all right and helps you to wash a drink down. I guess the Mexicans eat it, all right; they would. But you see, at a dinner club you don't really need much to *eat*—that is not the idea—it's a way of bringing fellows together and they can go off and get something to eat elsewhere later. So we just sat around and had smokes and drinks, and dipped bits of toast in the *chile con carne*.

The talk was all right, too. We were discussing Mr. Roosevelt, and some of the fellows were saying that he really represented a sort of world force—well, you know—that we have to put up with him. We broke up at eight-thirty and got back into town in time for a bite at the club—just a snack of cold lobster or something. But I was sorry to see that there were only thirteen present—and even at that, several fellows offered to drop out so as to break the hoodoo of thirteen. In fact three went.

The Hungarian dinner was the last, so there's no use in getting mad about it. Say! that stuff, that Goulash, is just poison! And, anyway, how can you eat—I mean men of our age—we're all around forty to fifty—if you're not getting any exercise, and are sitting around drinking cocktails! You *can't* eat! I just hated the idea as I felt that Hungarian dinner getting nearer—that Goulash, I mean! You don't know how the notion gets you when you belong to a dinner club that you've *got* to eat! Eat? Who wants to eat? I heard after, though I didn't know it at the time, that one or two members were knocked right out, knocked flat, after that Goulash! They were crazy enough to eat it. And that sour Hungarian wine—*Magyak-Buda*—ugh! The Hungarians, after all—as somebody said after dinner—are not a civilized people; we were discussing Mr. Roosevelt, and that had led up to the idea of civilization. Look at their government! Or, for the matter of fact, their religion—I don't mean I know what they are; I mean that the fellows who had eaten the Goulash said, Look at them!

Anyway, the Goulash dinner ended it. We all knew it at the time. One of the members, who had been in India and knew a cousin of Kipling's, was supposed to be getting up a Bengal dinner—curried duck with mangoes. But he says he can't get any mangoes. That's all right. We understand. The club is over.

And yet, isn't human nature queer! Within a few months, or a year, they'll be calling it the "good old dinner club"—and talking about the dinners of *chile con carne* and *Bouilla-baisse* with the wonderful talk about Mr. Roosevelt.

## UNCLE SAM, GOOD NEIGHBOUR

### *An Allegory*

I WONDER how the United States came to be the United States? I mean, how it came to take on its peculiar national character, as a sort of "neighbour" to all the world. As the years and the decades, and now even the centuries have gone past, we can begin to see this peculiar aspect of the United States, unknown anywhere else in history.

It is not imperial dominion, in fact it's not dominion or domination at all, but just a peculiar result of mingled merit, destiny and good fortune. People all over the world—Chinese in Chow Chow and Patagonians in Pat Pat—"look to the United States," as a sort of neighbour to appeal to, and to borrow from, just as among the earlier settlers in this country.

Ah! That's it! I see it now—the early settlers. That's where they got it from.

I think there must have been, I mean way back in early settlement times, a country store at a crossroads—you know the kind of place. I mean, store and post office and a farm combined, and this one called Sam's place. And the man who kept it they came to call Uncle Sam. They called him that when he was a long, slouching young man, and then when he was a long, slouching middle-aged man, and finally as a long, slouching old man—old or oldish—I don't think he ever really looked old. But they always called him Uncle Sam.

There were always one or two loafers in the store, sitting on nail kegs and whittling sticks. Uncle Sam sold pretty well everything, but, as a matter of fact, the neighbours seemed to do far more borrowing than buying.

In would come a little girl. "Please, Mr. Sam, ma would like the

loan of one of your teakettles."

"Now, which are you?" says Uncle Sam. "You're little Nicaragua, aren't you? Well, tell your ma she hasn't sent back that iron pot yet."

Or they came and bought things and just "charged" them.

In flounces a big, dark girl, all colour and style.

"Uncle Sam," she says, "let me have another yard of that red calico."

Uncle Sam takes his scissors.

"Are you paying for it, Miss Mexico?"

"No, charging it."

"Well, I suppose you've got to have it, and tell your pa that I paid him for the coal oil and he hasn't delivered it yet."

Yet Uncle Sam prospered—oh, ever so much! You see, the farm was a wonderful bit of land, and he owned a tannery and a saw-mill—oh, he had everything! Money just seemed to come without trying. "It is a good location," he said.

So, of course, all the neighbours seemed poor as beside Uncle Sam, and it was just natural that they borrowed his things and charged things and didn't pay, and ate candy ("conversation lozenges") out of the open barrel. He took it easily enough. They were, after all, his neighbours. He treated them all the same way; except that there was one special lot that used to come now and again, who were evidently favourites. These were settled up North and would come down in summer. "They're folk of my own," says Uncle Sam, "they settled back North but mebbe they'll come home again some day."

To this good neighbourship there was just, perhaps, one exception—or at least not exactly an exception—call it a special case. The reference, of course, is to old Squire Bull, who lived on a fine, big place at quite a little distance, because it was separated from Uncle Sam's corners by the whole extent of a big millpond, so big it was like a lake. From Sam's place you could just see the tops of Squire Bull's grand house and stables.

John Bull was his name, and he liked to call himself "plain John Bull," but all the neighbours knew that was just nonsense, for everybody saw that he was "stuck up" and couldn't be "plain" if he tried. Uncle Sam just couldn't get on to him; and that was a funny thing



because they were cousins, their folks having originally come from the same part of the country. Sam always used to deny this—at least when he was young. “He’s no cousin of mine,” he said. Later, as he got older, he said, “Mebbe he is,” and later still, “Oh, I shouldn’t wonder.” But he said it grudgingly.

For one thing Squire Bull irritated Uncle Sam by always referring to him as if he were just a boy—“that young man,” or “young Sam,” and yet here they were both old men, or getting close to it. And Squire Bull didn’t like to admit that, in point of money and consideration and standing, Uncle Sam was just as good as he was.

That’s the way they lived, anyway, till a reconciliation came about in the queerest way. It happened there came a gang of bandits to the settlement, or at any rate, the rumour of them. They were reported as robbing here and plundering there. People began to lock up the doors at night—a thing never done before—and you couldn’t be sure of travelling the roads in safety. Quite a few had been robbed, and one or two killed.

Some people wanted to organize and get together and hunt the bandits down. But Squire Bull wouldn’t believe in the stories about bandits. “All nonsense,” he said, “and if any of the fellows come around my place they’ll get a dose of cold lead.”

Uncle Sam didn’t do anything either. He was a peaceable fellow, never liking to interfere. “Keep out of quarrels” was his maxim. Yet he had a musket and a powder horn hanging in the store, and they said that when it came to shooting he was the best shot in the section. He never talked of it, but really he had been in the Indian War as a young man.

Well, one day, late in the afternoon, toward dusk, some of the children came rushing breathless into the store. “Mr. Sam, Mr. Sam!” they called. “Mr. Sam, the bandits have come, the gang of bandits; they’re over at Squire Bull’s place.”

“What’s that? What’s that?” said Uncle Sam, all confused.

“The bandits, they’re over at Squire Bull’s. We saw them smashing in the gates of the yard. We heard the shots. Oh, Mr. Sam, will they kill Mr. Bull?”

“Eh, what?” says Uncle Sam. “Smashing in the gates?”—he seemed hesitating—“hold on! What’s that? By gosh, that’s gunshots I hear them plain.”



In ran another child, wide-eyed with fright.

"Mr. Sam, come quick, they're over at Mr. Bull's and they've shot some of the help!"

"Is Squire Bull killed?"

"No, he ain't killed. He's in the yard with his back to the wall . . . his head's all cut . . . but he's fighting back something awful."

"He is, is he?" said Uncle Sam, and now he didn't hesitate at all. "Hand me down that powder horn, sis." He took the musket off the wall, and he took out of a drawer a six-shooter derringer that no one knew he had.

The children watched him stride away across the field faster than another man would run. Presently they heard shouting and more shots, and then there was silence.

It was just about dark when Uncle Sam came back, grim and dusty, his hands blackened with powder. The children stood around while he was hanging up his musket and his powder horn.

"Did you get the thieves?" they ventured timidly.

"The gol-darned scoundrels," the old man muttered, "there's some of them won't steal again, and the rest will be safe in jail for years to come. Too bad," he added, "some of them came of decent folks, too."

"And how's Squire Bull, is he killed?" the frightened children asked.

"Killed? No, sir!" laughed Uncle Sam, "he's too tough a piece of hickory for that. His head's tied up in vinegar but he's all right. We had a good laugh over it. He allowed I needn't have come, but I allowed I won the whole fight. We had quite an argument. But here, don't you get in my way, children. Hand me that clothesbrush and reach me down that blue coat off the peg, the one with the long tail—now, that hat."

"But you ain't never going out again, Mr. Sam, are you?"

"Sure, I am. I'm going back over to Squire Bull's. He's giving a party. Now hand me down those cans off that shelf."

And with that Uncle Sam began pulling canned salmon and canned peaches off the store shelves. "I thought I'd bring 'em along," he said. "That darned old fool—why didn't he say he was getting hard up? I don't believe the folks in his house have been fed right for months. . . . Pride, I supposes! . . . Still he's a fine man, is Squire Bull. My own cousin, you know, children."

## THREE SCORE AND TEN

OLD age is the "Front Line" of life, moving into No Man's Land. No Man's Land is covered with mist. Beyond it is Eternity. As we have moved forward, the tumult that now lies behind us has died down. The sounds grow less and less. It is almost silence. There is an increasing feeling of isolation, of being alone. We seem so far apart. Here and there one falls, silently, and lies a little bundle on the ground that the rolling mist is burying. Can we not keep nearer? It's hard to see one another. Can you hear me? Call to me. I am alone. This must be near the end.

I have been asked how old age feels, how it feels to have passed seventy, and I answer in metaphor, as above, "not so good."

Now let us turn it round and try to laugh it off in prose. It can't be so bad as that, eh, what? Didn't Cicero write a book on old age to make it all right? But you say he was only just past sixty when he wrote it, was he? That's a tough one. Well, what about Rabbi ben Ezra, you remember—"Grow old along with me." Oh, he was eighty-one, eh? No, thanks, I'll stay right here around seventy. He can have all his fun for himself at eighty-one.

I was born in Swanmoor, a suburb of Ryde in the Isle of Wight, on December 30, 1869. That was in Victorian England at its most Victorian, far away now, dated by the French Empire, still glittering, and Mr. Dickens writing his latest book on the edge of the grave while I thought out my first on the edge of my cradle and, in America, dated by people driving golden spikes on Pacific railroads.

It was a vast, illimitable world, far superior to this—whole continents unknown, Africa just an outline, oceans never sailed, ships lost over the horizon—as large and open as life itself.

Put beside such a world this present shrunken earth, its every corner known, its old-time mystery gone with the magic of the sea, to make place for this new demoniac confine, loud with voices out of emptiness and tense with the universal threat of death. This is

not mystery but horror. The waves of the magic sea called out in the sunlight: "There must be a God." The demoniac radio answers in the dark: "There can't be." Belief was so easy then; it has grown so hard now; and life, the individual life, that for an awakening child was so boundless, has it drawn into this—this alley-way between tall cypresses that must join somewhere in the mist? But stop, we are getting near No Man's Land again. Turn back.

Moving pictures love to give us nowadays "cavalcades" of events, to mark the flight of time. Each of us carries his own. Mine shows, as its opening, the sea beaches of the Isle of Wight. . . . Then turn on Portchester village and its Roman castle. . . . Queen Victoria going past in a train, in the dark, putting her head out of the window (her eight heads out of eight windows). . . . Now shift to an Atlantic sailing steamer (type of 1876) with people emigrating to Canada. . . . Then a Canadian farm in a lost corner of Ontario up near Lake Simcoe for six years. . . . Put in bears, though there weren't any . . . boarding-school, scenes at Upper Canada College—the real old rough stuff . . . University, cap and gown days, old style; put a long beard on the president; show fourteen boarding-houses at \$4.50 a week. . . . School teaching—ten years—(run it fast—I want to forget it). . . .

Then make the film Chicago University with its saloons of forty years ago, a raw place, nowhere to smoke. . . . And then settle the film down to McGill University, and run it round and round as slowly as you like for thirty-six sessions—college calling in the Autumn, students and co-eds and Rah! Rah! all starting afresh, year after year. . . . College in the snow, the February classroom; hush! don't wake them, it's a lecture in archaeology. . . . All of it again and again. . . . College years, one after the other. . . . Throw in, as interludes, journeys to England, a lecture trip around the Empire. . . . Put in Colombo, Ceylon, for atmosphere. . . . Then more college years. . . .

Then loud music and the Great War with the college campus all at drill, the boys of yesterday turned to men. . . . Then the war over, lecture trips to the U. S. . . . Pictures of Iowa State University. . . . Ladies' Fortnightly Club—about forty of them. . . . Then back to the McGill campus. . . . Retirement. . . . An honorary degree ("this venerable scholar"). . . . And then unexpectedly the

war again and the Black Watch back on the McGill campus.

Such is my picture, the cavalcade all the way down from the clouds of the morning to the mists of the evening.

As the cavalcade passes down the years it is odd how gradually and imperceptibly the change of outlook comes, from the eyes of wonder to those of disillusionment—or is it to those of truth? A child's world is full of celebrated people, wonderful people like the giants and magicians of the picture books. Later in life the celebrated people are all gone. There aren't any—or not made of what it once meant.

I recall from over half a century ago a prize-day speaker at Upper Canada College telling us that he saw before him the future statesmen, the poets, the generals and the leaders of the nation. I thought the man a nut to say that. What he saw was just us. Yet he turned out to be correct; only in a sense he wasn't; it was still only us after all. It is the atmosphere of illusion that cannot last.

Yet some people, I know, are luckier in this than I am. They're born in a world of glamour and live in it. For them there are great people everywhere, and the illusion seems to feed itself. One such I recall out of the years, with a capacity for admiration all his own.

"I sat next to Professor Buchan at the dinner last night," he once told me. "He certainly is a great scholar, a marvellous philologist!"

"Is he?" I said.

"Yes," my friend continued. "I asked him if he thought the Indian word *snabe* was the same as the German word *knabe*."

"And what did he say?"

"He said he didn't know."

And with that my friend sat back in quiet appreciation of such accurate scholarship and of the privilege of being near it. There are many people like that, decent fellows to be with. Their illusions keep their life warm.

But for most of us they fade out, and life itself as we begin to look back on it appears less and less. Has it all faded to this? There comes to me the story of an old Carolina negro who found himself, after years of expectancy, privileged to cast a vote. After putting the ballot paper in the box he stood, still expectant, waiting for what was to happen, to come next. And then, in disillusionment: "Is that all there is, boss? Is that all there is to it?"



"That's all," said the presiding officer.

So it is with life. The child says "when I am a big boy"—but what is that? The boy says "when I grow up"—and then, grown up, "when I get married." But to be married, once done and over, what is that again? The man says "when I can retire"—and then when retirement comes he looks back over the path traversed, a cold wind sweeps over the fading landscape and he feels somehow that he has missed it all. For the reality of life, we learn too late, is in the living tissue of it from day to day, not in the expectation of better, nor in the fear of worse. Those two things, to be always looking ahead and to worry over things that haven't yet happened and very likely won't happen—those take the very essence out of life.

If one could only live each moment to the full, in a present, intense with its own absorption, even if as transitory and evanescent as Einstein's "here" and "now." It is strange how we cry out in our collective human mind against this restless thinking and clamour for time to stand still—longing for a land where it is always afternoon, or for a book of verses underneath a bough where we may let the world pass.

But perhaps it is this worry, this restlessness, that keeps us on our necessary path of effort and endeavour. Most of us who look back from old age have at least a comfortable feeling that we have "got away with it." At least we kept out of jail, out of the asylum and out of the poor house. Yet one still needs to be careful. Even "grand old men" get fooled sometimes. But at any rate we don't want to start over; no, thank you, it's too hard. When I look back at long evenings of study in boarding-house bedrooms, night after night, one's head sinking at times over the dictionary—I wonder how I did it.

And school days—at Upper Canada College anno Domini 1882—could I stand that now? If some one asked me to eat "supper" at six and then go and study next day's lessons, in silence in the long study from seven to nine-thirty—how would that be? A school waiter brought round glasses of water on a tray at half-past eight, and if I asked for a whisky and soda could I have had it? I could not. Yet I admit there was the fun of putting a bent pin—you know how, two turns in it—on the seat where the study master sat. And if I were to



try that now at convocation they wouldn't understand it. Youth is youth, and age is age.

So many things, I say, that one went through seem hopelessly difficult now. Yet other things, over which youth boggles and hesitates and palpitates, seem so easy and so simple to old age. Take the case of women, I mean girls. Young men in love go snooping around, hoping, fearing, wondering, lifted up at a word, cast down by an eyebrow. But if he only knew enough, any young man—as old men see it—could have any girl he wanted. All he need do is to step up to her and say, "Miss Smith, I don't know you, but your overwhelming beauty forces me to speak; can you marry me at, say, three-thirty this afternoon?"

I mean that kind of thing in that province of life would save years of trepidation. It's just as well, though, that they don't know it or away goes all the pretty world of feathers and flounces, of flowers and dances that love throws like a gossamer tissue across the path of life.

On such a world of youth, old age can only gaze with admiration. As people grow old all youth looks beautiful to them. The plainest girls are pretty with nature's charms. The dullest duds are at least young. But age cannot share it. Age must sit alone.

The very respect that young people feel for the old—or at least for the established, the respectable, by reason of those illusions of which I spoke—makes social unity impossible. An old man may think himself a "hell of a feller" inside, but his outside won't justify it. He must keep to his corner or go "ga-ga," despised of youth and age alike. . . .

In any case, to put it mildly, old men are tiresome company. They can't listen. I notice this around my club. We founded it thirty years ago and the survivors are all there, thirty years older than they were thirty years ago, and some even more, much more. Can they listen? No, not even to me. And when they start to tell a story they ramble on and on, and you know the story anyway because it's the one you told them yesterday. Young people when they talk have to be snappy and must butt in and out of conversation as they get a chance. But once old men are given rope, you have to pay it out to them like a cable. To my mind the only tolerable old men are the ones—you notice lots of them when you look for them—who have had a stroke—not a tragic one; that would sound cruel—but just one

good flap of warning. If I want to tell a story, I look round for one of these.

The path through life I have outlined from youth to age, you may trace for yourself by the varying way in which strangers address you. You begin as "little man" and then "little boy," because a little man is littler than a little boy; then "sonny" and then "my boy" and after that "young man" and presently the interlocutor is younger than yourself and says, "Say, mister." I can still recall the thrill of pride I felt when a Pullman porter first called me "doctor" and when another one raised me up to "judge," and then the terrible shock it was when a taxi man swung open his door and said, "Step right in, dad."

It was hard to bear when a newspaper reporter spoke of me as the "old gentleman," and said I was very simply dressed. He was a liar; those were my best things. It was a worse shock when a newspaper first called me a septuagenarian, another cowardly lie, as I was only sixty-nine and seven-twelfths. Presently I shall be introduced as "this venerable old gentleman" and the axe will fall when they raise me to the degree of "grand old man." That means on our continent any one with snow-white hair who has kept out of jail till eighty. That's the last and worst they can do to you.

Yet there is something to be said even here for the mentality of age. Old people grow kinder in their judgment of others. They are able to comprehend, even if not to pardon, the sins and faults of others. If I hear of a man robbing a cash register of the shop where he works, I think I get the idea. He wanted the cash. If I read of a man burning down his store to get the insurance, I see that what he wanted was the insurance. He had nothing against the store. Yet somehow just when I am reflecting on my own kindness I find myself getting furious with a waiter for forgetting the Worcester sauce.

This is the summary of the matter that as for old age there's nothing to it, for the individual looked at by himself. It can only be reconciled with our view of life insofar as it has something to pass on, the new life of children and of grandchildren, or if not that, at least some recollection of good deeds, or of something done that may give one the hope to say, *non omnis moriar* (I shall not altogether die).

Give me my stick. I'm going out on to No Man's Land. I'll face it.

## INDEX: THERE IS NO INDEX

READERS of books, I mean worth-while readers, like those who read this volume, will understand how many difficulties centre round the making of an Index. Whether to have an Index at all? Whether to make it a great big one, or just a cute little Index on one page? Whether to have only proper names, or let it take in ideas—and so so. In short the thing reaches dimensions that may raise it to the rank of being called the Index Problem, if nothing is done about it.

Of course one has to have an Index. Authors themselves would prefer not to have any. Having none would save trouble and compel reviewers to read the whole book instead of just the Index. But the reader needs it. Otherwise he finds himself looking all through the book, forwards and then backwards, and then plunging in at random, in order to read out to a friend what it was that was so darned good about Talleyrand. He doesn't find it, because it was in another book.

So let us agree, there must be an Index. Now comes the trouble. What is the real title or name of a thing or person that has three or four? Must you put everything three or four times over in the Index, under three or four names? No, just once, so it is commonly understood; and then for the other joint names, we put what is called a cross-reference, meaning, "See this" or "See that." It sounds good in theory, but in practice it leads to such results as—*Talleyrand, see Perigord* . . . and when you hunt this up, you find—*Perigord, Bishop of, see Talleyrand*. The same effect can be done flat out, with just two words, as *Lincoln, see Abraham* . . . *Abraham, see Lincoln*. But even that is not so bad because at least it's a closed circle. It comes to a full stop. But compare the effect, familiar to all research students, when the circle is not closed. Thus, instead of just seeing Lincoln, the unclosed circle runs like this, each item being hunted up alphabetically, one after the other—*Abraham, see Lincoln* . . . *Lincoln, see Civil War* . . . *Civil War, see United States* . . . *United States, see America* . . . *America, see American History*

. . . *American History*, see also *Christopher Columbus*, *New England*, *Pocahontas*, *George Washington* . . . the thing will finally come to rest somehow or other with the dial pointing at see *Abraham Lincoln*.

But there is worse even than that. A certain kind of conscientious author enters only proper names, but he indexes them every time they come into his book, no matter how they come in, and how unimportant is the context. Here is the result in the Index under the Letter N:

*Napoleon*—17, 26, 41, 73, 109, 110, 156, 213, 270, 380, 460. You begin to look them up. Here are the references:

Page 17—"wore his hair like Napoleon."

Page 26—"in the days of Napoleon."

Page 41—"as fat as Napoleon."

Page 73—"not so fat as Napoleon."

Page 109—"was a regular Napoleon at Ping-pong."

Page 110—"was not a Napoleon at Ping-pong."

Page 156—"Napoleon's hat."

Pages 213, 270, 380, 460, not investigated.

Equally well meant but perhaps even harder to bear is the peculiar kind of index that appears in a biography. The name of the person under treatment naturally runs through almost every page, and the conscientious index-maker tries to keep pace with him. This means that many events of his life get shifted out of their natural order. Here is the general effect:

John Smith: born.p.1: born again.p.1: father born.p.2: grandfather born.p.3: mother born.p.4: mother's family leave Ireland.p.5: still leaving it.p.6: school.p.7: more school.p.8: dies of pneumonia and enters Harvard.p.9: eldest son born.p.10: marries.p.11: back at school.p.12: dead.p.13: takes his degree.p.14: . . .

Suppose, then, you decide to get away from all these difficulties and make a Perfect Index in which each item shall carry with it an explanation, a sort of little epitome of what is to be found in the book. The reader consulting the volume can open the Index, look at a reference, and decide whether or not he needs to turn the subject up in the full discussion in the book. A really good Index will in most cases itself give the information wanted. There you have, so to speak, the Perfect Index.



Why I know about this is because I am engaged at present in making such an Index in connection with a book on gardening, which I am writing just now. To illustrate what is meant, I may be permitted to quote the opening of the book, and its conversion into Index Material:

*As Abraham Lincoln used to say, when you want to do gardening, you've got to take your coat off, a sentiment shared by his fellow enthusiast, the exiled Napoleon, who, after conquering all Europe, retaining only the sovereignty of the spade in his garden plot at St. Helena, longed only for more fertilizer.*

As arranged for the Index, the gist, or essential part of this sentence, the nucleus, so to speak, appears thus:

*Abraham Lincoln*; habit of saying things, p.1; wants to do gardening, p.1; takes his coat off, p.1; his enthusiasm, p.1; compared with Napoleon, p.1.

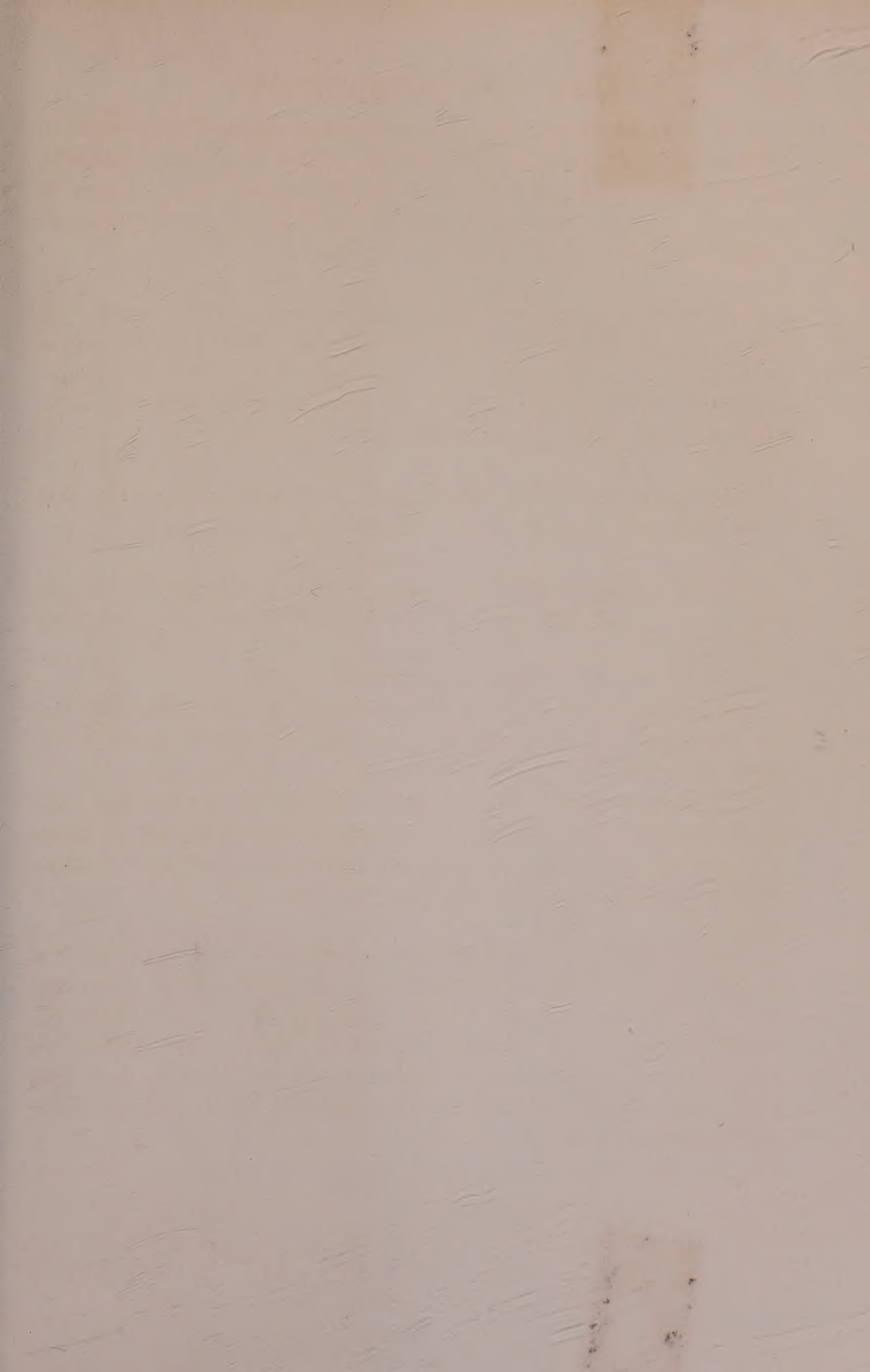
*Coat*; taken off by Abraham Lincoln, p.1.

*Gardening*; Lincoln's views on, p.1; need of taking coat off, for, p.1; Napoleon's enthusiasm over, p.1; see also under spade, sovereignty, St. Helena.

*Napoleon*; his exile, p.1; conquers Europe, p.1; enthusiastic over gardening, p.1; compared with Lincoln; retains sovereignty of spade, p.1; plots at St. Helena, p.1; longs for fertilizer, p.1; see also Europe, St. Helena, fertilizer, seed catalogue, etc., etc. . . .

That's as far as I've got with the sentence. I still have to write up *sovereignty*, *spade*, *sentiment*, *share*, *St. Helena*, and everything after S. There's no doubt it's the right method, but it takes time somehow to get the essential nucleus of the gist, and express it. I see why it is easier to do the other thing. But then sin is always easier than righteousness. See also under Hell, road to, Pavement, and Intentions, good.





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